Ontario

The Report of the Ministerial Inquiry on Religious Education in Ontario Public Elementary Schools

Glenn A. Watson
Chairperson

January, 1990

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Ministerial
Inquiry on
Religious
Education

Enquête
ministérielle sur
l'enseignement
religieux

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January 31, 1990

The Honourable Sean Conway
Minister of Education
22nd floor, Mowat Block
Queen's Park
Toronto, Ontario
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Dear Mr. Conway:

It is my pleasure to submit to you the Report of the Ministerial Inquiry on Religious Education in Ontario Public Elementary Schools, established by Order in Council 427/89, dated February 9, 1989.

Further to the delivery of this report, I would be pleased to meet with you to discuss any aspect of its content, to respond to any questions you might have, or to provide further support in whatever way you or the officials in your ministry might determine.

I wish to express my appreciation for the opportunity of participating in this important task. The challenge was exciting, and the experiences during the inquiry were interesting, enlightening and enjoyable. It is my sincere hope that this report will prove to be helpful in the resolution of a rather controversial issue in Ontario.

Yours sincerely,

Glenn A. Watson, Ed.D.
Chairperson

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to Gene Hooks and George Knill who provided support and assistance as members of the inquiry staff during the term of this project.

The interest and sincere concern of the many individuals, groups, and organizations who made presentations or submitted letters or briefs also must be acknowledged. Their participation was appreciated and provided a meaningful contribution to the outcome of this inquiry.

G.A.W.

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Ministerial Inquiry on Religious Education in Ontario Public Elementary Schools

Executive Summary

BACKGROUND

Many factors contributed to the need for an inquiry on religious education in the public elementary schools of Ontario. Section 28 of Regulation 262 outlining the requirements for religious education has not been successfully implemented in recent years, and it became apparent that the regulation needed to be addressed to remove the sources of misunderstanding, misinterpretation and disagreement.

The regulation was initiated originally under different conditions. The nature of Ontario's society was different, the expectations of people were different, and the framework within which institutions such as the public education system operated was different. The latter half of this century has provided new challenges due to several factors, many of which have tended to affect Section 28 of Regulation 262 of the Education Act.

Other developments contributing to a review of the religious education issue have been the concerns of various religious organizations and related groups, and concerns expressed by legislators and members of the public. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and its interpretation by the courts in the Sudbury and Elgin County cases have highlighted the issue during the last two years and increased concern.

THE ISSUES

Considerable confusion has centred around the interpretation of the terms "religious education" and "religious instruction". The two terms have often been used synonymously, even though they represent quite different approaches. For purposes of clarification in this inquiry and in the report of the inquiry, religious instruction is defined as "a methodology designed to nurture and perpetuate a particular set of religious beliefs, attitudes and behaviours". Religious education is defined as "the acquisition of knowledge and awareness enabling individuals to understand, appreciate and respect various religious beliefs, attitudes and behaviours".

The various written and oral arguments presented during the inquiry revealed a discrepancy in the expectations of individuals regarding the responsibilities of the public education system in general, and the role of religion in the educational process in particular. There was also evidence in the information presented to the inquiry that some degree of religious intolerance does exist in Ontario.

A potential barrier frequently posed was that there is no room in the already busy school day for something which might be called religious education. While the many curriculum demands must be acknowledged, this inquiry emphasizes the point that those subjects to be included in the curriculum must be determined on the basis of their importance in preparing children for their future roles as adults. If there is a defensible rationale, then the subject must be included. If a sound rationale for the contribution of the subject cannot be identified and defended, then it should not be included. This challenge can only be logically approached by considering what is best for children, by identifying in the best way possible the nature of the society of their future, and then by deciding on the best way to prepare them for that eventuality.

Support for religious education became very evident. There is, however, opposition for various reasons. Agreement on the nature of a religious education program is not quite so clear. Many organizations, groups, church congregations and associations have addressed this issue, and their opinions and suggestions were submitted in briefs and letters. Many other letters and briefs representing only the individual submitting them were also received.

The reasons for support were extensive and have been provided in greater detail in the text of the report. The reasons for non-support varied. Individuals may not believe in any religion. They may believe in a religion but hold the position that the home and religious communities should bear the responsibility for this aspect of education. Their opposition, in some cases, is based on unfortunate incidents which have been experienced during religious education programs in schools.

CONCLUSIONS

This inquiry suggests very strongly that there is a rationale and a need for some form of religious education in the education of children. Without this dimension, education is not complete. It is a necessary component of the educational process in order to develop respect and appreciation which can only come from awareness and understanding based on accurate information and knowledge.

The school system must accept this responsibility as an important part of its mandate. It should not, however, make any attempt to indoctrinate, or to influence or undermine the religious beliefs of any individual.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The inquiry recommends a compulsory elementary school program called Religion Studies, which would be a multifaith, non-denominational program. It should be an educational program averaging sixty minutes per week and focus on major world religions. Its purpose should not be to indoctrinate or instruct in any particular faith, but rather to learn about religion and to develop an awareness and understanding of the beliefs, attitudes and behaviours of those who are followers of major living religions.

Christianity has been and continues to be the predominant religion in Ontario. It has played a significant role in the development of Canada, our institutions and our way of life. We do live in a pluralistic society, however, and many other religions are represented. They too need to be recognized, accepted and respected in the same way as they are expected to respect Christianity. To achieve that goal, students must be provided with appropriate opportunities to learn about the basic concepts involved in the other religions of our society.

A recent decision of the Supreme Court of Ontario determined that no religion can occupy a position of primacy in the opening exercises of public schools. For the public school system, this means that other religions must be included when religious activities or exercises are pursued. In recognition of this legal decision and also recognizing the importance of Christianity as well as other religions in Ontario, this inquiry has recommended that a minimum of one-third of the total time given to Religion Studies during a school term be devoted to Christianity, with a similar amount being devoted to non-Christian religions. The religions to be addressed in the remaining one-third of the total time should be determined within each board of education through a process identified in the recommendations as a Religion Studies Advisory Committee.

With a multifaith program which is not a program of indoctrination but rather an educational program designed to help children learn about religions, there should be virtually no need for exemptions. This has been one of the problems resulting from programs in the past which were instructional in nature.

Further recommendations address supplementary activities intended to support the kind of program recommended, and to ensure that the programs implemented adhere to predetermined principles, aims and objectives. A series of pilot projects will provide a trial period for identifying problems associated with the program designed by a representative task force.

The recommendations also call for the program to be taught by certificated teachers adequately prepared through appropriate pre-service and in-service training programs.

Additional recommendations address other implications related either directly or indirectly to the proposed Religion Studies program and its implementation in the public elementary schools of Ontario. While this summary is intended to capsulize the general thrust of the report, a complete and comprehensive grasp of the total issue and the recommendations involved can only be achieved by reading the entire report.

Section 1.0

INQUIRY ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN ONTARIO PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

1.1 Establishment of the Inquiry

On January 12, 1989, the Honourable Chris Ward, Minister of Education for the Province of Ontario, announced in the Legislature the establishment of a Ministerial Inquiry on Religious Education in Ontario Public Elementary Schools. The mandate and terms of reference for this inquiry were set out in the Order in Council that followed (Appendix A). In his comments to the Legislature, Mr. Ward stated: "This government believes there is an important role for religious education in the public elementary schools. While this view is shared by many religious groups, parents and educators, opinions differ on what should be contained in an appropriate policy on religious education."

Mr. Ward also stated that the regulation governing religious education in Ontario's public schools was introduced in 1944, and a review, in consultation with the many groups which make up Ontario's multicultural society, was "timely, appropriate and useful." He also added that the need for a review was underlined by recent developments, including the creation of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, its interpretation by the courts, and the passage in 1988 of a resolution by the Legislature to consider, for Ontario schools, a multigrade, multifaith curriculum.

The regulation governing religious education to which the Minister referred is Regulation 262, Section 28. Revisions to Section 28 pertaining to religious education were also announced by the Minister of Education on January 12, 1989 (Appendix B).

1.2 The Inquiry Process

Early in February, 1989, a memorandum was forwarded to the chairpersons and directors of education of all public school boards in Ontario. Also included was a survey questionnaire to provide some basic information regarding the current status of religious education in Ontario public elementary schools (Appendix C).

Also in early February, 1989, letters were forwarded to religious organizations, teacher associations, the Ontario home and school association, and public school trustee associations in Ontario (Appendix D) as well as the departments of religious studies and faculties of education in Ontario universities, to make these interested parties aware of the inquiry and its major terms of reference, and to invite their input as an important part of the consultative process.

An advertisement was placed in all Ontario daily newspapers on February 17, 1989 (Appendix E), inviting individuals or organizations to submit their ideas and suggestions on the topic of religious education in general, or the terms of reference of the inquiry in particular.

A further advertisement was placed in all Ontario daily newspapers on May 26, 1989 (Appendix F), announcing the dates and locations of a series of public meetings to be held across Ontario as part of the consultative process of the inquiry. Individuals or groups were invited to make advance arrangements for presentations at one of these scheduled meetings.

It became necessary, at a later date, to make some adjustments in the original schedule of public meetings to reflect the response received (Appendix G). The number of days in Thunder Bay, Sudbury, North Bay and Ottawa was reduced in each case from two to one. One additional day was added to each of the Toronto and Mississauga schedules, and Woodstock was added as an additional location for one day.

In total, public meetings involving 21 days were held in 18 different locations across the province to provide opportunities for individuals, organizations or groups to express their opinions and offer suggestions related to religious education and the specific terms of the inquiry. Some of the presenters at the public meetings had made written submissions earlier, in response to the newspaper advertisement of February 17, 1989. Others had not.

Additional consultations and discussions were held with a variety of individuals and groups in response to their requests or expressions of interest during the course of the inquiry, and as a result of requests by the inquiry.

To obtain information about religious education in the public elementary schools of other Canadian provinces, letters were forwarded to the Ministers of Education, teacher associations, parent associations and trustee associations in each province.

In response to the invitation for input extended to individuals, groups and organizations within Ontario, 990 letters and 408 briefs were received. A list of the briefs received appears in Appendix H. During the public meetings across the province, 234 briefs were presented, some of which were new briefs not submitted earlier.

Section 2.0

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

2.1 Ontario

The historical background of religious education in and beyond Ontario has been extensively researched on previous occasions. A comprehensive and well-organized summary appears in The Report of the Committee on Religious Education in the Public Schools of the Province of Ontario, 1969. For purposes of this current inquiry, with a relatively brief timeline, there appeared to be little need to duplicate to the same extent, either during the inquiry process or during the compilation of this report, the research and the nature of information provided in the report of the earlier commission.

As a general background for this particular report, only brief references to the activities relating directly to the issues of religious education or its historical development up to the 1960s have been included. Developments occurring subsequent to the 1969 report, however, have been included to provide an updated historical summary but, more importantly, to provide a broader perspective of the various issues with religious connotations leading up to the establishment of this ministerial inquiry.

Schooling of their children was not a major priority of the early settlers of Upper Canada. Boys were needed to work the fields with their fathers, and the girls helped with the homemaking. Some parents taught their children to read, using what books they had. In many cases, the Bible was their only book.

As communities grew, private schools opened. However, very few settlers could afford the fees, so most of these schools were in operation for only a few months. The wealthier families either hired tutors or sent the children abroad for their education. Nevertheless, these families felt strongly that their sons were the future leaders of society and eventually they demanded that the government start to provide for their schooling.

In 1807, the government responded by passing an act "authorizing the establishment of a school in each of the eight districts then in existence in Upper Canada." [1] Although these schools were supported with public funds, attendance was restricted to the boys of affluent families. It was felt that there was no need to educate the children of the masses.

By 1816, the number of settlers from the United States and the United Kingdom had increased to a point where something had to be done about educating their children, so the Common School Act came into existence. It allowed for a government-supported school to be constructed when a minimum of twenty students could be enrolled.

Religious instruction was also dealt with at this time through recommendations for the common schools to the effect that:

(a) the labours of the day commence with prayer;

(b) they conclude with reading publicly and solemnly a few verses from the New Testament, proceeding regularly through the Gospels, and

(c) the forenoon of each Saturday be devoted to religious instruction.

With the construction of new schools, there arose a debate as to what should be taught in them. The Reverend John Strachan, who became president of the Provincial Board of Education in 1823, and his followers, wanted a system of education based on Church of England ideals. This, they hoped, would stop the rise of democratic ideas coming from American settlers and, at the same time, strengthen loyalty to Great Britain. The Methodists from the United States, under the leadership of the Reverend Egerton Ryerson, were not willing to have their children indoctrinated by the Church of England. The controversy between these two factions would last for many years.

The number of schools built under the Common School Act proved to be inadequate and where schools were built, only a few students attended regularly and the quality of teaching was frequently poor. For the most part, teaching positions were filled by those who were waiting for better jobs to become available.

New school legislation, as outlined in the School Act of 1843, provided that pupils be allowed to receive the religious instruction that their parents or guardians desired. The act did stipulate, however, that "no child shall be required to read or study in or from any religious book, or to join in any exercise of devotion or religion which shall be objected to by his or her parents or guardians." [2]

In 1844, Egerton Ryerson was appointed Assistant Superintendent of Education for Upper Canada and, in 1846, Superintendent of Education. For the next thirty years Ryerson shaped education in Ontario, based on the principles that education should be universal, compulsory, practical, Christian, and free. However, Ryerson was firm that religious education must be non-sectarian.

Ryerson's School Act was passed in 1846. It recommended that "the extent and manner in which religious instruction shall be introduced and maintained in each school is left with the Trustees of the School -- those chosen guardians of the Christian educational interests of the youth in each School Section." [3] The government was to have no involvement with religious instruction, except to supply the facilities.

In 1847, Ryerson reported that two-thirds of the schools were providing religious instruction based on the Bible. However, for many people, this was not enough. It was argued that teaching the Bible should be compulsory and that it should be done by the clergy since most teachers were not qualified to teach religion.

In direct opposition to this pressure, Malcolm Cameron pushed through the Legislature a school bill which outlawed from schools all books containing theological dogmas or doctrines. Ryerson resigned, stating that the legislation would disallow the Bible and the National Readers. The government refused his resignation. A new bill, the School Act of 1850, was passed, and became the foundation of the Ontario school system.

A regulation for the organization, government, and discipline of common schools, adopted in 1850, stated that "a Teacher should be a person of Christian sentiment",[4] and "In each school the Teacher should exert his best endeavours, both by example and precept, to impress upon the minds of all children and youth committed to his care and instruction, the principles of piety, justice, and a sacred regard to truth, love of their country, humanity and universal benevolence, sobriety, industry, chastity, moderation and temperance, and those other virtues which are the ornament of society and on which a free constitution of government is founded." [5]

Opening and closing exercises were dealt with, in 1855, by legislation which made provision for each common school to be opened and closed each day with prayer and the reading of a portion of scripture. The Lord's Prayer was to form a part of the opening exercises and the Ten Commandments were to be taught to all pupils and repeated once a week. Students whose parents objected could be excused upon written request of the parents.

A revision, in 1857, permitted clergy to give instruction to pupils of their church in each common school at the end of the school day. Where there was more than one clergyman wanting to teach, the local trustees assigned the teaching days.

The 1860s were relatively quiet as far as religious education was concerned. As the number of schools increased, Sunday Schools stopped teaching reading and writing, and the day schools stopped teaching the catechism.

In 1871, the private grammar schools became the public high schools. Egerton Ryerson retired in 1876, after achieving his goal of non-sectarian public schools that were compulsory and free for everyone.

Premier Oliver Mowat replaced the appointed Superintendent of Education with a Minister of Education, Adam Crooks, directly responsible to the Legislature. Opposition members objected, claiming that the party in power would back the Minister no matter whether he did right or wrong. Ryerson took the opposite position, arguing that a cabinet minister was needed because as Minister, he could answer his critics in the Legislature.

During the late 1880s and early 1890s, there was great concern over school attendance, because of child labour, and this resulted in a campaign for stricter attendance laws. "This campaign for stricter enforcement of attendance laws was paralleled by that of the Women's Christian Temperance Union for the inclusion of 'temperance education' in the elementary school course of study." [6] The government agreed and, in 1885, temperance education was made optional. It was made compulsory eight years later. However, George Ross, the Minister of Education, believed that temperance and attendance could not be legislated. He believed that religious instruction and the personal character of teachers provided the solution. In 1896, legislation, consolidating and revising the laws respecting the Education Department, listed as one of the duties of every teacher "to inculcate by precept and example, respect for religion and the principles of Christian morality, and the highest regard for truth, justice, love of country, humanity, benevolence, sobriety, industry, frugality, purity, temperance, and all other virtues." [7]

Religious education became an issue again after World War I. Churchgoing people were dissatisfied with the choice of scripture passages approved for opening exercises. There was also concern about the post-war attitude toward morals and the increase in juvenile delinquency. This change in social behaviour was evident in the new styles of dress, the breaking of prohibition laws, and a decline in church attendance.

In 1927, eight Protestant denominations met to found the Ontario Religious Education Council. The main thrust of the organization was to get compulsory religious education taught by members of the clergy during school hours, in both elementary and secondary schools.

The rise of Hitler, the perception of "godlessness" in society, and the outbreak of World War II strengthened the movement for increased emphasis on religious education in the schools. As an example, Inspector J. J. Wilson told the Bruce County Educational Association, "We cannot ensure democracy until we have Bible study in our schools." [8]

In 1940, the Ontario Department of Education issued a document entitled "Bible Readings for Schools". This list was distributed to teachers so that they might select suitable daily Bible readings for the opening and closing exercises in elementary schools.

When the Conservative Party came to power in 1943, George Drew became Premier and Minister of Education. In his Speech from the Throne in February, 1944, he announced that religious education would be offered in public and secondary schools. The students were to be prepared to live in a democracy which was based on the Christian ideal. Whereas religious instruction had normally been given by clergymen outside school hours, the new policy stated that elementary classroom teachers should give such instruction in two weekly half-hour periods inside the school day as part of the regular curriculum. A school board could use local clergymen, and any school board could exercise the exemption option if there were objections to religious education. Individual teachers and pupils could also request exemption.

This announcement, embodied in Regulation 13, also gave school boards the option of teaching religion in secondary schools for two half-hour periods each week.

In 1944, as a result of Regulation 13, the Department of Education issued a teacher's manual to be used as a resource document for a program in Religious Education in the public schools. The following statement from the manual gives the purpose of the program:

"The foundation of this course is the study of the Scriptures, which must have behind it the teaching of the Bible as thorough and serious as that which the teacher gives to Social Studies or Science." [9]

The manual outlined what should be done in the religious exercises and in the two one-half hour periods per week devoted to religious education. Grades 1 through 3 were to concentrate on the New Testament, grades 4 through 6 on the Old Testament, and in grades 7 and 8 the Testaments were linked to give the student the complete historical picture. Suggestions for memory work and hymns were also provided.

Guide books for religious education for grades 1 to 3 were distributed in 1944 and for grades 4 to 6 the next year. These guides had been used for a number of years in schools in England and were modified for use in Ontario. Instruction was given by classroom teachers. There were no religious education guide books for grades 7 and 8, so clergymen usually gave religious instruction in these grades.

In 1949, the regulation and accompanying program for religious education in the public schools were reissued. The regulation modified the list of approved text books while the program booklet was amended to include suggested Bible readings.

The legislation was quickly implemented but was in general disuse by the end of the 1950s. There was some concern that the Bible stories for elementary schools were Protestant in nature, yet the schools were open to all. The fact that many clergymen were not very successful as teachers also contributed to the failure of the program. Although many boards dropped religious education during this time, they did not necessarily obey the legislation by asking for an exemption.

In the early 1960s, the criticism of the behaviour of young people started again, similar to the situation following World War I. Sunday School attendance was declining and young people were rebelling against the morality of their parents. Delinquency was increasing, as was the use of drugs. The symptoms caused many people to demand religious and moral training in the schools.

On the other hand, there were those who wanted to remove whatever religious education there was in the schools. The population of Ontario had changed after the war. Heavy immigration had brought an influx of faiths different from the traditional religious denominations in Ontario. Objections against religious education were based on the grounds that it contravened the separation of church and state. It also was claimed that exemption from classes caused psychological and emotional harm to the children who were involved.

The government established a committee to review the situation. On January 27, 1966, an order in council was approved providing for the appointment of a special committee to:

(a) examine and evaluate the present program of religious education in the public schools and to consider suggestions for changes and improvement;

(b) study the means by which character-building, ethics, social attitudes and moral values may best be instilled in the young, and

(c) consider the responsibilities of public schools in these matters.

The Honourable J. Keiller Mackay was appointed to chair the committee. During the course of the committee's deliberations and research, the members were impressed by the work of Lawrence Kholberg, who was developing a structure for moral development derived from the work of Piaget. The committee attempted to identify moral education as distinct from religious education.

Some of the recommendations of the Mackay Committee were:

(a) The present course of study in religious education in the elementary schools of Ontario should be discontinued.

(b) The legislation giving boards the option of teaching religion in secondary schools for two half-hour periods per week should be repealed.

(c) In elementary schools, opening exercises, consisting of the National Anthem and a prayer, either of a universal nature appealing to God for help in the day's activities, or the Lord's Prayer, should be held in the home rooms each morning.

(d) In secondary schools, opening exercises, consisting of the National Anthem and either a prayer of universal character or the Lord's Prayer, should be held at the beginning of any student assembly but not in the classroom.

(e) The duty of fostering character-building should be discharged continuously and pervade every activity from the beginning of elementary school to the end of secondary school.

(f) Information about and respect for all religions should be an essential objective from kindergarten to grade 13 and one which should be achieved through incidental study.

(g) History departments in secondary schools should offer a formal course of study dealing with the principal religions of the world.

(h) Teachers' colleges, faculties of education and colleges of education should provide new teachers with the appropriate training necessary to teach these programs in religious education. The Department of Education should provide adequate in-service training for teachers already in the classrooms.

In summary, the Mackay Committee recommended a switch from religious education to moral education. The committee concluded that moral development is integral to the public education system and that the thrust should be the development of the ability to reason morally rather than the teaching of specific moral virtues.

While the recommendations of this report were not officially adopted, they did result in some activity. In 1971, the Ministry of Education introduced a curriculum guideline in World Religions for grades 11 and 12. In 1972, the ministry began to fund research into moral education and, in 1974, a booklet entitled "Moral Education in the Schools" was distributed to school boards by the ministry. Each board was requested to set up a committee to review the booklet and make recommendations to the board.

It was a period of high interest in moral and values education. Boards appointed values education consultants. Professional development days were devoted to values education and there many conferences and workshops on the topic. The result of this high-profile activity was very positive. Moral and Values Education was integrated throughout the curriculum in many jurisdictions.

In 1978, the Ministry of Education established a study to review and report on religious education in Ontario. After an intensive survey to determine what was happening in schools with respect to religious education, the study recommended that:

(a) the ministry produce a support document to The Formative Years, on religious education, and

(b) boards should continue to have the option of being exempted from teaching religious education.

In March 1980, the Ministry of Education conducted a provincial survey on school practices and programs related to Religious Exercises, Religious Education, and Moral and Values Education. The survey involved 117 elementary schools, 98 secondary schools, and 61 directors of education. Regarding religious education in elementary schools, the survey produced the following observations:

(a) In 4% of the schools, all classes had two one-half hour periods of religious education each week.

(b) In 25% of the schools, religious education was very irregular, ranging from 15 minutes being added onto opening exercises on some days, to special programs at Easter and Christmas.

(c) In 71% of the schools, there was no religious education on a formal basis.

(d) The lack of ministry guidelines on religious education was cited most often as the reason why there were not more religious education programs. Teacher pre-service training, teacher in-service training and curriculum materials were also cited as strong needs.

(e) 95% of the elementary schools reported that moral and values education was being integrated throughout the curriculum.

2.2 Other Canadian Provinces

The following summaries of developments in other provinces were compiled from material received in response to requests for information regarding religious education policies, directed to all:

(a) Ministers of Education;

(b) School Trustee Associations;

(c) Teacher Federations, and

(d) Home and School Associations.

Alberta

Legislation states that a local school board may prescribe religious instruction for pupils in public elementary schools. It is estimated that 10 to 15 per cent of elementary schools offer religious education programs. Many of those that offer programs provide a religious studies program for Roman Catholic students and an interdenominational program for non-Roman Catholics.

British Columbia

The current School Act states that "schools shall be conducted on secular and non-sectarian principles. The highest morality shall be inculcated, but no religious dogma or creed shall be taught." [10]

Manitoba

Religious education programs in the public elementary schools are the responsibility of the local school board. The content of program is determined by the local board. Instruction is not to exceed two and one-half hours per week.

New Brunswick

The public education system is non-sectarian and no provision is made for religious education in publicly-funded schools.

Newfoundland

All government-funded schools are denominational. The main denominations are Roman Catholic, Seventh Day Adventist, Pentecostal and the Integrated, which represents Anglican, Moravian, Presbyterian, Salvation Army, and the United Churches.

There are compulsory religious education programs in place for all students in elementary schools. The curriculum for the Integrated schools is general in nature, and deals with religion from a global perspective. The curriculum for the other three systems is tailored toward the religious beliefs of the respective denominations.

Nova Scotia

There is no allowance for religious education in publicly-funded schools.

Prince Edward Island

The public education system is non-sectarian and has no approved curriculum for religious education.

Quebec

There is a dual confessional school system in Quebec -- Protestant and Catholic. There is a committee for each system that has regulatory powers regarding the teaching of moral and religious education. These powers include the qualifications of teachers, the approval of programs, textbooks, and teaching materials. A clear distinction is made between the informational content of religion to be taught in schools and the formative aspect of religion which belongs in the church and home. There is instruction about the beliefs and practices of other religions. In Protestant elementary schools, there is provision in the official student timetable for 100 minutes per week for religious education.

Saskatchewan

Religious education programs are the responsibility of local school boards. Instruction is not to exceed two and one-half hours per week.

2.3 England

Requirements for both religious education and collective worship were established by the Education Act of 1944. Through the regulations accompanying the act, it was mandatory that religious education be provided in all county schools. The act legislated that "the school day in every county school shall begin with collective worship on the part of all pupils in attendance at the school." It also stated that "religious instruction shall be given in every county school." Both the daily act of collective worship and the religious education provided were to be non-denominational.

In the case of religious education, the program was to be in accordance with a locally agreed syllabus prepared by a conference, established by the local educational authority. The conference consisted of four committees, each representing a particular interest group. The four committees were:

(a) such Christian and other denominations as the local education authority deemed would appropriately represent the major religious traditions of the area;

(b) the Church of England;

(c) associations representing teachers whom the local authority believed ought to be represented, and

(d) the local education authority.

Each of the committees had one vote. All four committees had to agree on a syllabus before it could be acceptable for recommendation to the local education authority. Upon the unanimous recommendation of the conference, an agreed syllabus from another jurisdiction might be adopted for use in whole, or in part. An entirely new syllabus might also be prepared by the conference.

The following extract from the Birmingham syllabus illustrates the importance attached to the agreed syllabus, and also the anticipated nature of religious education in the schools.

> The syllabus should be used to enlarge pupils' understanding of religion by studying world religions and by exploring all those elements in human experience which raise questions about life's ultimate meaning and value.

The Education Reform Act of 1988 introduced some changes which affected religious education and collective worship. Several sections of the Education Act 1944 were re-enacted; others were amended. The changes introduced by the 1988 Education Reform Act reflected the Government's commitment to strengthening the position of religious education and collective worship. Their special place in the school curriculum was affirmed by requiring all those in authority in education to exercise their functions relating to religious education and religious worship in ways which would ensure that the school curriculum would be balanced and broadly based, so that it:

> "promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development of pupils at the school and of society", and
>
> "prepares such pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life". [11]

The 1988 Education Reform Act abolished the use of the term "religious instruction". For the first time in law, religion taught in the classrooms is now called "religious education". It had long been contended by many that the use of the word "instruction" suggested something too limited or narrow, and too suggestive of a program that reflected a restricted body of knowledge or doctrine. The move has been well received, and in the words of one individual "is of considerable significance, because instruction is a content-centred process which emphasizes the transmission of knowledge from the teacher to the learner, whereas education is a person-centred process which emphasizes human development".

Changes contained in the 1988 Education Reform Act applied to both collective worship and religious education in schools in England. The requirements for a daily act of collective worship for all pupils, which in county schools must be non-denominational, remained unchanged. Amendments did state, however, that collective worship in county schools must be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character though not distinctive of any particular Christian denomination. An authoritative legal interpretation of what is meant by "broadly Christian" has not yet been provided. The act did state that most acts of worship over a school term must be broadly Christian, and those that are must reflect broad traditions of Christian belief to an extent and way which gives them a Christian character, but which, at the same time, is also appropriate having regard to the family background, ages and aptitudes of the pupils involved.

When the principal of the school has reason to believe that the requirement for Christian collective worship should not apply in the case of the entire school or any class within the school, an application for a determination in response to that concern is considered and resolved by the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education of the particular local education authority.

In the case of religious education, some sections of the 1944 Education Act were re-enacted, and others were amended. There still must be provision for religious education for all students. The religious education provided in county schools must be non-denominational and must be in accordance with a locally agreed syllabus prepared by the conference as provided for in the act.

New locally agreed syllabuses developed after the 1988 Education Reform Act must reflect the fact that religious traditions in the country are, in the main, Christian, yet also take account of the teaching and practices of other major religions. Although religious education must be non-denominational in county schools, provisions of the 1988 Education Reform Act made it clear that teaching about denominational differences is permitted. Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education must be established according to a specified composition and with their functions clearly identified. If the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education determines the need at any time for the locally agreed syllabus to be reviewed, it can require the local education authority to set up a conference for that purpose.

Through the 1988 Education Reform Act, it is evident that religious education is expected to be a fundamental part of the curriculum in the schools of England. It is also evident that the Government of England believes that all those concerned with, or involved in, religious education should seek to ensure that it does provide respect, understanding, and tolerance for those who adhere to different faiths.

2.4 United States

The responsibility for education in the United States is given to the individual states. The Constitution insists that church and state must be separate. Governments are not to publicly fund schools where there is confessional religious education. This does not prohibit religious studies of a non-confessional nature.

For many years, there has been no attempt to include religion in the classrooms of schools in the United States because of the separation of church and state affairs, and the perception that religion is a divisive subject. Recent developments provide growing evidence of a desire to incorporate a discussion of religion into the curriculum of the public schools, which represents a departure from the previous attitude that religion should be ignored as a factor in American or world culture.

American Supreme Court rulings in the 1960s provided support for religious education, through the decisions handed down in the legal cases known as Abington v. Schempp and Murrau v. Curlett. These and other recent Supreme Court pronouncements on religion reflect some major changes in the attitude toward religion in general, and religious education in particular.

Other developments in the United States reveal that program revisions to include religious topics in various subjects such as history, economics, etc. have occurred in several locations in recent years, including the states of Arizona, California, Connecticut, Florida, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York and Pennsylvania.

The National Council on Religion and Public Education was formed recently. It is composed primarily of educators, and has no particular religious affiliation. In conjunction with other religious and educational groups, a statement was developed entitled "Religion in the Public School Curriculum: Questions and Answers". This document, which has been widely distributed, addresses several questions and explains how religion can be taught in schools in ways that do not violate the constitution or the beliefs of students and parents.

Public support for teaching about religion in schools in the United States continues to appear in the news media. For example, "Few schools offer courses that compare religions or study their works. That separation of religion from history and from life puts a wall between our students and knowledge.... Our schools should be neutral in teaching about religion, not hostile to it. Proper guidelines for courses about religion can keep teachers from preaching a faith to our kids while teaching them about religion. And teaching about religion can help our children understand our society. Religions are part of our history, and history belongs in our schools."

Section 3.0

MORE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN ONTARIO

On June 24, 1982, Bob McKessock, MPP for Grey, brought a resolution to the floor of the House regarding religious education. Mr. McKessock wanted Section 50 of the Education Act and the regulations pertaining to religious education to be strictly followed. His motion resolved that the section of Regulation 262 allowing the Ministry of Education to grant exemptions to boards from teaching religious education be repealed. Mr. McKessock was concerned that since Canada was founded on Judaeo-Christian beliefs and is known as a Christian country and that only 30% of Canadians were attending church, there was a need for an education that would provide students with exposure to Biblical truths. The Legislature voted 56-22 in favour of the resolution, but the legislation was not changed.

When, on June 12, 1984, Premier William Davis announced the extension of secondary school funding to Roman Catholic separate school boards, he also announced the formation of a commission on private schools. The Report of the Commission on Private Schools in Ontario was presented to the government on October 31, 1985. Recommendation #47 dealt with religious education in elementary schools. The commission suggested that the two one-half hour periods per week set aside for religious education could be potentially beneficial to a multicultural society such as we have in Ontario. The commission recommended that the Ministry of Education develop new materials for these elementary school programs and that the programs be developed from a comparative perspective. The commission stressed that confessional objectives were important but were the obligation of the family and religious communities and not the schools.

The Ecumenical Study Commission on Public Education, established in 1969, draws representation from the Anglican, Baptist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic and United Churches. Over the years, the Ecumenical Study Commission has hosted conferences on religious education and has published materials on religious education topics. The position of the commission has been one of support for religious education as a fundamental part of public education.

Recommendations outlining the position of the commission have been presented to the Ministry of Education on more than one occasion during the 20 years of the commission's existence. Following are three of the commission's recommendations:

(a) that the Ministry of Education establish a task force to assist in the development of policy and programs in the public elementary schools of Ontario;

(b) that religious education taught in Ontario public schools should be rooted in a non-confessional, multifaith approach to religious education, and

(c) that at least the equivalent of two one-half hour periods per week should be allocated to the teaching of religious education.

As a result of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Canadians have become more aware of the civil liberties of the individual. Two sections of the charter, in particular, have been referred to in legal challenges of the Education Act and its Regulations, regarding religious exercises and religious education. These particular sections are:

2. Everyone has the following fundamental freedoms:

(a) freedom of conscience and religion;

15(1) Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, or mental or physical disability.

In March, 1988, the Supreme Court of Ontario ruled that religious instruction in Ontario's schools did not violate the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The legal challenge to the section of the regulation permitting school boards to offer two half-hour periods of religious education each week in elementary schools was brought by the Canadian Civil Liberties Association on behalf of itself and several parents whose children attended schools within the jurisdiction of The Elgin County Board of Education. The judges concluded that the challenge did not establish infringement or denial of religious freedom or equality of rights under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. A notice of appeal was subsequently filed with the Ontario Court of Appeal but as of this date, no decision has been rendered.

On May 19, 1988, Dr. Richard Allen, MPP for Hamilton West, moved a resolution in the Legislature regarding religious education. He recommended that:

(a) a multigrade, multifaith religious education curriculum be developed;

(b) it be taught by certified teachers with appropriate training;

(c) a religious advisory council be established, and

(d) pilot projects be initiated at an early date.

The motion was carried and referred to the Select Committee on Education.

In June, 1988, the Ontario Public School Trustees' Association released the results of a study which indicated that two-thirds of the public elementary schools did not offer the mandated religious education courses because there were no Ministry of Education guidelines or direction as to what was appropriate for children today. An association policy statement recommended that:

(a) multifaith and multicultural religious education be provided in the public schools;

(b) the Ministry of Education should take the lead in developing guidelines and resource materials;

(c) a board could be exempted from teaching religious education in response to community concerns;

(d) students could be exempted from religious education, and

(e) religious education be taught by the regular classroom teacher.

On September 23, 1988, the Ontario Court of Appeal struck down a regulation under the Education Act requiring public schools to use the Lord's Prayer and read from Christian scriptures. The case was brought before the courts by three Sudbury parents. The judges ruled that the regulation violated the rights of non-Christians.

Subsequent to the ruling, the Ministry of Education established an interim policy whereby opening and closing exercises were made optional for school boards. In schools where exercises were held, the singing of "O Canada" and content that reflected the spirit and ruling of the Court of Appeal were required.

On January 12, 1989, changes to Section 28 of Regulation 262 concerning opening or closing exercises were announced by the Honourable Chris Ward, Minister of Education. The amended regulation included the following changes:

1. All public elementary and secondary schools must be opened or closed each day with the national anthem, "O Canada". "God Save the Queen" could be included at the discretion of each public school board.

2. The inclusion of any content beyond "O Canada" was to be optional for each public school board.

3. Where boards wished to include other material, the content would include one or both of the following:

   (a) one or more readings that impart social, moral, or spiritual values and that are representative of our multicultural society. Readings may be chosen from both scriptural writings, including prayers, and secular writings, and

   (b) a period of silence.

These revisions to Section 28 of the regulation responded to the court decision and to the religious diversity represented in the classrooms in Ontario schools today.

Concurrent with the issuance of revisions regarding opening or closing exercises, the Minister of Education established a Ministerial Inquiry on Religious Education in Ontario Public Elementary Schools. In his statement to the Legislature on January 12, 1989, Education Minister Chris Ward said, "The Government believes there is an important role for religious education in public elementary schools. While this view is shared by many religious groups, parents, and educators, opinions differ on what should be contained in an appropriate policy on religious education."

The terms of reference for this inquiry included a review of the existing policy regarding religious education and the formulation of recommendations regarding the adoption of an appropriate religious education policy for the future.

Section 4.0

CURRENT SITUATION IN ONTARIO

Initially, immigrants to Canada came mainly from Britain and Europe. They came for economic or political reasons and the religions of these people were primarily Protestant or Roman Catholic. Consequently, in schools the differences among Christian denominations were recognized in religious exercises and religious education. However, in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, the number of non-Christians living in Ontario increased, and changed Ontario from a population composed almost entirely of Christians to a multireligious society.

The following table, using information obtained from Statistics Canada, shows the religious makeup of Canada in 1871, and of Ontario in each of the census years since 1951, 1981 being the last year for which data on religious faith is available:

RELIGIOUS DENOMINATIONS

	Canada	Ontario	Ontario	Ontario	Ontario
	1871	1951	1961	1971	1981
Total Population	3,700,000	4,597,542	6,236,092	7,703,105	8,534,285
<u>% By Denomination</u>					
Anglican	13.5%	20.3%	17.9%	15.8%	13.5%
Baptist	6.6%	4.6%	4.0%	3.7%	3.4%
Jewish	0.3%	1.9%	1.8%	1.6%	1.7%
Lutheran	1.0%	2.9%	3.9%	3.5%	2.9%
Presbyterian	15.5%	9.6%	7.9%	7.0%	6.1%
Roman Catholic	41.4%	24.8%	30.0%	33.3%	35.0%
United	16.3%	28.7%	26.8%	21.8%	19.3%
Other Religions	5.3%	6.9%	7.4%	8.8%	10.9%
No Religion	0.1%	0.3%	0.8%	4.5%	7.2%

The following table shows the religious makeup of Ontario and the changes in each of the census years since 1951, when religious denominations are grouped as Christian and Non-Christian:

	1951	1961	1971	1981
Population	4,597,542	6,236,092	7,703,105	8,534,285
Christian	4,413,845	5,825,436	7,121,195	7,627,730
%	96.0%	93.4%	92.4%	89.4%
Non-Christian	183,697	410,656	581,910	906,555
%	4.0%	6.6%	7.6%	10.6%

Immigration patterns changed in recent years. Britain and Europe gradually regained their prosperity, resulting in fewer people emigrating for economic reasons. Increased immigration from Asia occurred, and the multicultural nature of the province became even more evident. From 1982 to 1986, there were approximately 225,000 immigrants who settled in Ontario, or an average of 45,000 each year. Almost one-half of these people came from countries where Christianity is not the dominant religion. In 1987, 1988, and 1989, the number of immigrants to Ontario from other countries increased to 85,000 each year. Again, almost one-half came from countries where Christianity is not the dominant religion.

The Ministry of Education reacted quickly and positively to ensure that education in Ontario responded to the multicultural nature of the province. One of the thirteen Goals of Education for Ontario's schools outlines the role schools should play in preparing students to work and live in a multicultural community. It states that each student should be helped to "develop esteem for the customs, cultures, and beliefs of a wide variety of societal groups." A list of The Goals of Education appears in Appendix I.

In 1983, the Ministry of Education sought to increase the awareness of the multicultural nature of the province by distributing the document Education for a Multicultural Society. The following are some important statements from that document:

The Ministry of Education acknowledges the responsibility of preparing all pupils to live in our multicultural society and increasingly interdependent world.

The educational programs in our schools are designed to assist and encourage each pupil to:

- understand and appreciate points of view of ethnic and cultural groups other than his/her own;
- develop an understanding of such concepts as community, conflict, culture, and interdependence;
- develop the positive attitudes that will be needed for a satisfying life in a pluralistic society. [14]

The History and Contemporary Studies guideline, published in 1986, states that students should be encouraged to:

- understand the aspirations, needs, values, and culture of a variety of groups in Canada and in the world;
- ...extend their knowledge of humanity and of the social, economic, cultural, political, legal, and religious facets of human history and contemporary society. [15]

Although immigration patterns in the United States and Canada have been similar, what happens to immigrants after they arrive is somewhat different in each country. The United States is known as the "great melting pot". Theirs is a society where racial amalgamation and social and cultural assimilation take place. Canada, however, and Ontario in particular, have become pluralistic societies. As such, members of diverse ethnic, racial, and religious groups maintain an autonomous participation in, and development of, their traditional cultures within the confines of a Canadian identity.

Some of the principles that apply to a pluralistic society are:

- it seeks to enhance the common good;
- it grants the prerogative of diversity;
- the privilege of choice is preserved;
- a spirit of mutual respect is fostered;
- there is equality of opportunity, and
- differences are celebrated.

These principles of a pluralistic society must be recognized also in the schools if we are to have a just society in which both minority and majority groups can live together in peace and understanding.

In addition, the religious pluralism of the province has an implication for religious education in the schools. Newcomers hope that there will be a recognition of their beliefs. They deserve to have information about their religion shared with sensitivity and respect.

It is important to prepare pupils for life in a pluralistic society such as Ontario, and to help them to develop a greater understanding of the diversity of the global community.

Section 5.0

GENERAL NATURE OF INFORMATION RECEIVED

5.1 Public School Board Survey

Of the 78 public boards surveyed to obtain information on the status of religious education in elementary schools, 61 boards (78%) completed and returned the questionnaire. These boards represent approximately 712,000 students and 38,000 teachers in 2,200 public elementary schools.

Of the 61 responding boards, 18 indicated that they applied for and received exemption from the teaching of religious education from the Minister of Education under subsection (15) of Section 28 of Regulation 262. The reasons given for requesting an exemption were:

- the multicultural, multifaith nature of the community;
- the lack of ministry guidelines;
- the shortage of time in the school day;
- the lack of resource materials;
- the absence of appropriate teacher preparation, and
- the existence of moral and values education as an alternative program.

There were approximately 326,000 elementary students enrolled in the jurisdictions of boards that requested and received exemptions.

Twelve boards had not requested exemption but did not provide a religious education program. There were approximately 176,000 students enrolled in these boards.

Nine boards indicated that they offered a full religious education program according to the regulations. There were approximately 30,000 students and 1,600 teachers in these boards. Of these, 500 students and 29 teachers asked for exemption from religious education.

Twenty-two boards reported that they provided non-regular religious education programs. In most cases, religious education was left to the principal and teachers in individual schools to decide on the existence, as well as the nature, of the program. The programs ranged in activity from the required two half-hour periods per week (about 5% of the schools), to some religious education at Christmas and Easter. There were approximately 182,000 students and 1,000 teachers in these boards. Of these, 962 students and one teacher asked for exemption from religious education.

Among the boards providing either a regular or partial religious education program, the instructors vary, and may be teachers, lay persons, or clergy. The choice of instructor depends upon several factors including the nature of the program, the local board, and the principals and teachers in a particular school.

Of the nine boards offering a full religious education program, instruction was provided by teachers in two of these boards. One board used only clergy or lay persons as instructors. In the remaining six boards, teachers, clergy, and lay persons were involved in providing instruction.

In nine of the 22 boards providing non-regular religious education programs, instruction was given by teachers. In the remaining 13 boards, instruction was given by lay persons or clergy in three boards and by a combination of teachers, clergy, and lay persons in 10 boards.

Boards also were requested to list the needs that should be addressed to assist a system in implementing a religious education program. The needs most frequently identified were:

- Ministry of Education guidelines;
- staff in-service training, and
- resource materials.

Other needs noted included funding, additional time allocated in the school day, qualification courses for teachers and a rationale for religious education.

Boards were asked to make recommendations that would be relevant to the inquiry. The following recommendations received an equal amount of support:

- provide ministry guidelines for a multifaith program;
- integrate religious education into current programs;
- permit boards to develop their own religious education programs;

- provide ministry guidelines but allow board exemptions;
- provide ministry guidelines for a mainly Christian program, and
- have no religious education in the schools.

There was minor support for enhancing the current values education program in lieu of religious education.

5.2 Public Opinion

As a result of the two separate newspaper advertisements and the formal letters soliciting input, 1,398 letters and briefs were received. Of that number, 234 briefs were presented at the public meetings.

Although there were several submissions expressing opposition to religious education programs, the majority of the letters and briefs indicated strong support for religious education in the public elementary schools. Agreement on the nature of an appropriate religious education program, however, was less evident than agreement on the existence of a program.

For the most part, the letters that were received came from concerned and interested individuals expressing their opinions on the issue. The majority of these letters expressed support for continuation of a Judaeo-Christian emphasis in religious education. More detailed and comprehensive briefs tended to be received from groups, associations, and organizations. The majority of the briefs supported a program that would be a multifaith or multireligious approach, to include information about other religions as well as Christianity.

The most frequent arguments offered in support of religious education were:

- it contributes significantly to the total development of the child;
- it contributes to cohesion in society and harmonious relationships between individuals and groups;
- it is an essential component of a well-rounded education;
- it is necessary if we are to be true to our heritage, because Canada was founded on Judaeo-Christian principles;
- it is necessary because of the multifaith society in which we live;
- it provides insight for other subject areas, and
- it provides significant help in understanding events and issues in the contemporary world.

The most frequent arguments to support giving Christianity a position of primacy in any religious education curriculum were:

- the population of Ontario is predominantly Christian;
- Ontario was founded on Judaeo-Christian principles and there is no need to teach anything else;
- the two dominant religious groups in Ontario are Roman Catholics and Protestants. The Roman Catholics have their own school system, with freedom to teach their own religion, so the Protestants should have similar opportunities;
- the multifaith approach will only confuse young people, and
- the majority should not be dictated to by the minority.

The most common arguments presented in support of a multifaith approach were:

- today's students will live and work, as adults, in a multicultural and multifaith society, both in this province and beyond Ontario's borders. To do so effectively, they should know about the religious beliefs of their neighbours and co-workers;
- it will promote tolerance and understanding in public and private life;
- to make our society work, multiculturalism must work. In order for multiculturalism to work, there is a need for a multifaith program in religious education;
- there is a need to develop a critical understanding of religion so that students will formulate a personal philosophy as a result of encountering world religions, and
- to understand world events, it is necessary to know something about the religions of the people who determine these events.

Arguments presented by those opposed to a multifaith approach to religion were:

- children under the age of 14 have difficulty understanding the concepts of their own religion taught at home and in their place of worship. Any attempt to teach them about other religions at this time would be confusing;

- there are many religions in the world and it would be impossible to deal with all of them. Choices would have to be made and there would never be consensus as to what should be taught in schools;

- non-traditional religious groups would expect that their religions be taught in schools as part of a multifaith program. Some of these religions would not be acceptable to many people, and

- a multicultural program should be introduced into the social studies curriculum. This would satisfy the need for children to learn about other people in their society without having to learn about their religions.

The arguments presented by those opposed to any religious education were:

- religion belongs in the church and the home;

- religious education will be divisive since there will be no consensus on what it should be;

- there would have to be an exemption clause for students, and this reflects discrimination and causes psychological damage, and

- religion cannot be taught to young children without confusion, if the religion is not their own.

Section 6.0

CONCEPTUAL OVERVIEW

6.1 Education

The purpose of education is to provide each student with an equal opportunity to develop to his or her fullest potential as an individual and as a responsible member of society. How to successfully accomplish this purpose, and, indeed, determine what areas of emphasis should be addressed in the educational process, have always been subjects of discussion and disagreement. A search of the educational literature will reveal many different philosophical positions on, and approaches to, education in general, and specific curriculum areas in particular.

Education is a vital process that supports, encourages and guides the growth, development, and maturing of individuals. It is a process that involves the development of the whole child and, as such, includes the intellectual, the physical, the social, the emotional, the moral, the cultural, and the spiritual aspects of development. Physical development is necessary to enhance the growth, health, and strength of the body. Intellectual development is critical to develop the mind and, through increased awareness and understanding, to enhance the skills of decision-making and problem-solving.

Social and emotional development are important in facilitating relationships and contributing to rational behaviour. The cultural dimension of education contributes to freedom of thought, freedom of expression, creativity, and the development of self-esteem and confidence in oneself and one's potential. There is also, however, the spiritual dimension. This development is very necessary for the potential qualities and virtues innate in all human beings to be revealed, supported and nurtured, so that individuals may achieve harmony within themselves, with others, and with the world in which they live.

Within the range of subjects and experiences provided in the curriculum during the education process, knowledge and skills are acquired. They, in turn, lead to an expansion and extension of awareness and understanding. It is through the provision of a broad base of understanding and awareness, based on knowledge and skills, that a solid foundation is established for the formation of appropriate attitudes. Attitudes develop within the limitations of experiences, awareness, perceptions, the extent of knowledge, and the quality of skills acquired. Subsequent behaviour reflects the attitudes that have been formed, and reveals the way an individual feels about things, about issues, and about people -- their way of life and their actions. Positive attitudes contribute to behaviour that reflects respect, acceptance, sensitivity and appreciation.

Stated in philosophical terms, it is expected that public education will inform and educate and, in that process, assist students in the search for truth by reasoning objectively, thinking rationally, and arriving at impartial and unprejudiced information. This purpose was highlighted as a philosophical position of the Hall-Dennis Report of the 1960s which stated:

> The underlying aim of education is to further man's unending search for truth. Once he possesses the means to truth, all else is within his grasp. Wisdom and understanding, sensitivity, compassion, and responsibility, as well as intellectual honesty and personal integrity, will be his guides in adolescence and his companions in maturity....This above all is our task: to seek and to find the structure, the organization, the curriculum, and the teachers to make this aim a reality in our schools and in our time. [16]

To provide a blueprint for public education in Ontario, thirteen goals of education have been identified (Appendix I). Each refers to a particular area or areas that should guide educational systems in developing programs to provide students with the knowledge, skills, experiences and capabilities necessary to prepare them for the future and their participation as citizens in tomorrow's society. "The identification and achievement of the goals of society are shared responsibilities of students, teachers and parents. The major purpose of a school is to help each student develop his/her potential as an individual and as a contributing, responsible member of society who will think clearly, feel deeply and act wisely." [17]

The important challenge for the educational system is to translate these goals into curriculum objectives that will guide the learning process and result in meaningful and appropriate learning experiences, enabling students to embark on a life-long pursuit of knowledge, truth, and understanding. "The school has an unrivalled opportunity to help young people explore the many dimensions of learning and living...and set them on the path to becoming mature, responsible, co-operative members of society." [18]

Through a carefully planned program involving not only the classroom but also resources extending beyond the classroom, "students can be provided with many important learning experiences that involve such things as the following:

- the development of positive attitudes towards the rights of others;
- the demonstration of respect for other races, cultures, languages, and religions." [19]

A Ministry of Education policy document, The Formative Years, identifies in general terms the kinds of opportunities that the curriculum should provide for each child in the primary and junior years. It states that the curriculum will provide opportunities for each child:

- to gain the knowledge and acquire the attitudes that he or she needs for active participation in Canadian society;

- to develop the moral and aesthetic sensitivity necessary for a complete and responsible life. [20]

The Formative Years also outlines aims related to both specific and general subject areas within the primary and junior divisions. These are intended to serve as guides in developing programs which provide students with opportunities to achieve the level of competence and the forms of growth and development anticipated within these aims. Some of the specific learning opportunities to be provided for students as outlined in The Formative Years are:

- become aware of the values that Canadians regard as essential to the well-being and continuing development of their society -- namely, respect for the individual, concern for others...;

- understand his or her own nature and needs as a basis for understanding the nature and needs of others;

- develop self-respect, respect for the rights of others, and respect for the rule of law;

- appreciate the development of civilization through the ages and understand and respect customs, institutions, and the historical background of diverse social groups and communities;

- develop an understanding of such concepts as community, conflict, culture, and interdependence;

- become familiar with the geography and culture of the community, the province, and the country;

- begin to understand and appreciate the points of view of ethnic and cultural groups other than his or her own. [21]

Albert Einstein once said, "If mankind is to survive, we shall require a substantially new manner of thinking." The educational process is an effective catalytic agent in change of any kind, including a change in the manner of thinking. Education has the potential to be a constructive and effective force in removing the barriers of ignorance and prejudice. Within an appropriate context, the awareness developed through education can be effective in building bridges of understanding based on mutual respect for diverse cultures, traditions and ways of life.

Public schools are seen as "a true reflection of society and an excellent environment in which to nurture attitudes and social relationships that can be carried over into, and benefit, the society as a whole in which we all live." [22]

Several statements from a 1984 Alberta committee studying tolerance and understanding reinforce the need for a new way of thinking. For example:

> Tolerance, understanding, and respect for others cannot be achieved by resorting to stringent enforcement measures, penalties and jail sentences. Tolerance, understanding and respect for others occur when people learn to cherish, comprehend, and enjoy each other's similarities and differences. [23]

> Tolerance means a respectful attitude to others and to their inherently human right to hold opposing viewpoints even though one may not agree with those viewpoints. [24]

> In order to further enhance our sense of tolerance, understanding, and respect for others, it is clear that the educational system can only do so much to fulfill our aspirations. The family, the social and spiritual communities, and the workplace all have vital roles to play. [25]

> However, the role of the school is immensely important in assisting our children to become more understanding and more aware of the basic concepts of tolerance, understanding and respect for all people, notwithstanding their origins or philosophical attitudes. [26]

The process of providing appropriate educational programs for students in schools is a logical and developmental series of carefully planned activities. This sequence of activities is initiated by the determination of needs, and subsequent planning is directed toward the ultimate goal of successfully meeting those needs. Needs that can and should be addressed through educational programs represent the rationale for the existence of the educational system, and determine the emphasis that should be provided in the various phases of the process. As stated in The Formative Years, planning implies purpose and a careful correlation between means and end. The end result is curriculum, the particular arrangement of objectives, content, and learning experiences within the school.

The Formative Years also states, "As part of its province-wide responsibility, the Ministry of Education establishes a common framework of goals and aims for education in Ontario, and sets out in a general way the learning opportunities that the programs in the schools should make available." [27] These expectations are provided to educational systems in the form of policy and support documents and curriculum guidelines. It then becomes the responsibility of each school system to adhere to the policies identified, and to use their resources to develop courses of study and programs to meet the needs of students.

General goals must be translated into more specific objectives or outcomes to serve as meaningful guides in determining the nature and content of the programs to be provided and the sequence of learning appropriate for students. Programs must take into consideration the age of the learners, the stages of development through which children progress, the nature of the learning process and what is known about it, and how the learning experiences can best be related to the experiences and abilities of the learner.

As needs change, or as new needs are identified, the process of planning and developing programs must incorporate these changes. New programs may have to be developed, or existing programs revised, in an ongoing attempt to achieve the specific objectives and outcomes which will make it possible for the broader goals and aims to be realized.

The successful implementation of any carefully planned program requires equally well-planned methodology. The potential for meaningful learning is determined by the appropriateness of the subject matter, the quality of the learning environment, the competence of the teachers, and the suitability of the methodology.

The subject matter chosen must be both age appropriate and suitable for the level of development of the learners. Care must be taken to ensure that concepts which are introduced are appropriate for the age, stage of development, and interest level of the students. They also must be meaningful in making a genuine contribution to the child's understanding of the topic or theme involved.

The learning environment must be one that supports, reinforces, and complements the entire learning process. It should be one that accepts and welcomes information from a variety of sources to provoke thought, initiate discussions, and elicit creative ideas. There must be freedom to explore and freedom to fail without fear.

Teachers must be skilled in providing guidance and in supporting, facilitating and interacting in ways that expose the learner to appropriate experiences and opportunities through which learning can most effectively occur. They must deal with issues and concepts in an open way that does not reflect bias or prejudice. It is appropriate and necessary to expect that teachers will inculcate, by precept and example, those values and virtues that are espoused as desirable in our society.

The selection of methodology must vary according to the needs of the students. They need to feel secure and comfortable with the expectations identified for them, and through the opportunities for problem-solving and decision-making provided for them, they should realize positive growth in their feelings of self-confidence, self-esteem and independence. The choice of appropriate methodology is determined by the learning styles and emotional needs of the students and, as with content or subject matter, must be made on the basis of age appropriateness and stage or level of development.

It is accepted educational practice that, whatever methodology is selected, in planning for effective learning it is important to proceed from the familiar to the unfamiliar, from the known to the unknown, from the immediate to the more distant, and from the concrete to the abstract.

6.2 Religious Education

The variety of definitions for the term "religion", offered by different dictionaries, includes "a particular system of faith and worship"; "the service and worship of God or the supernatural"; "a personalized set or institutionalized system of religious attitudes, beliefs and practices", and "human recognition of superhuman controlling power and especially of a personal God entitled to obedience". Other, and perhaps simpler, definitions offered by individuals include "what people believe and what they do about it", and "a special way of looking at and talking about the experience of living".

It can be said that definitions of the term "religion" are as diverse as the positions that people take when the topic of religion is under study or discussion. For purposes of this particular inquiry, religion has been defined as: "Those beliefs which guide and determine an individual's attitude and behaviour regarding the value, purpose and meaning of life".

The functioning of any society depends to a large extent on values that are religiously or spiritually oriented. No society, especially one that claims to be democratic, can continue to function effectively with any degree of co-operation unless it has a set of commonly held beliefs. One author states, "Persons demand beliefs; societies need convictions; and civilizations require a basic social ethical vision by which to guide behaviour." [28]

Religious belief is an important aspect of human life because it is a major influence in determining attitudes toward ultimate reality, life, the world, other people and oneself. Religion has been important in history and has been associated with both social and political reform, and with conflict and reaction. It continues to be a significant factor in contemporary world events. An awareness of religion and an understanding of religious belief are necessary in order to develop a better appreciation of the world and events that are happening now or have occurred in the past. Humans have need of a "religion", or whatever it is they call that in which they believe. There is an underlying human need to believe in something, and if it is not a religious faith, then it becomes belief in, or worship of, something else.

The original religious faith of mankind has undergone many changes over time and has gradually become fragmented into the various religions of the world. Even Christianity has expanded into many different denominations, each of which subscribes to a particular doctrine. At the same time, there is evidence of a decline in religious participation and attendance at places of worship in Canada. [29]

The author of a recent article in a church publication said, "The greatest division in our world today is not between those of different faiths but between those who have faith and those who have no faith at all; those who hope and those who despair; those who believe that life has an eternal destiny and an ultimate meaning and those who fear that all is meaningless and will end only in death and destruction". [30] Religion, then, serves the important function of giving meaning and purpose to human experiences.

Religion has been proclaimed as having the potential to contribute to unity and harmony. It has become obvious during this inquiry process that religion also has the potential to generate strong feelings and disagreement. From the comments of various individuals and groups during the public meetings, and from the written letters and submissions received, there also appears to be evidence that there is a degree of religious intolerance in Ontario. In considering appropriate ways in which this intolerance might be reduced, it is necessary to identify the underlying reasons for its existence.

There are several factors which give rise to religious intolerance. One perspective of this problem is outlined by Coward, [31] who states that the attitude that "we can share and be friends only if you give up your ways and accept mine -- is characteristic of the intolerance of cultural and religious ways different from our own". He outlines five causes which contribute to this intolerance. There is a biological explanation which is the instinct to love others within your own group. "In-group love," he says, "is good for those within the group but bad for those outside. Its flipside is the aggression shown to other members of the same species, outside the group." [32]

A second cause is referred to as the psychological basis of intolerance:

> In modern pluralistic society, the experience of religious or cultural commitment involves an act of the will. One chooses to become and remain a member of a particular group....Having made a commitment, one becomes ego-attached to that commitment so that it becomes very difficult to be open and objective towards someone who has chosen to make a commitment different from one's own. Thus we are led to see others, outside our group, as bigots or heretics who wilfully choose to go against the truth....As human beings, our natural tendency is to see our own cultural, linguistic and religious choice as the truth -- and the one others should adopt if they choose to live among us. They could just as well choose to believe and behave as we do, but yet they wilfully make what to us is an inferior choice. [33]

A philosophical cause is also identified by Coward as a factor contributing to religious intolerance.

> The refusal to 'see' the world through any but one's own conceptual 'glasses' is the philosophical basis for religious intolerance....Once a certain philosophic viewpoint is either consciously chosen or unconsciously adopted (by virtue of being the dominant idea of the day), it is then very difficult for most people to allow that another philosophic or religious perspective can make sense of the universe... In each religion, a carefully devised process called religious education is at work which teaches a particular conceptual system as the truth....Thus, for most people, reality is seen in only one way, through one received set of concepts, with little awareness of the possibilities of other conceptual systems. [34]

There is also a scriptural basis suggested as a cause of religious intolerance:

> In four of the five world religions, scripture provides the revelation of truth upon which the religion is based....If the revealed scripture of each religion is the truth, then any other scripture must be shown to be in error or at best incomplete....The idea that one's own scripture is superior to all others provides a fertile ground for the growth of religious intolerance. [35]

It is not surprising that another basic cause of religious intolerance is identified as theological.

> The belief that one's own scripture is the full revelation of divine truth leads naturally to theological developments....As a systematic formulation of that revealed truth, one's own theology must necessarily be superior to other formulations based on less adequate revelations. Other theologies can be accepted but always on a secondary level that is superseded by one's own theology. [36]

The polarizing of individuals on the issue of religion, and the religious intolerance which then may become evident, can be explained as a reflection of the feelings of individuals about their own religion, or about the religions of others, or perhaps these reactions reflect the potential threat which one may perceive for his or her religion from the religions of others. Coward's article also emphasizes that

> Requirements for true religious tolerance have one basic prerequisite for their success, namely, that all participants have accurate information about each other's religions. Fulfilling this prerequisite is probably the single largest obstacle to the achievement of true tolerance. The majority of people today are illiterate in their own religion as well as in the religion of others. [37]

If the desired goal of religious tolerance is to be addressed in the public elementary schools, it would be through the subject designated as religious education. Provision for the inclusion of religious education has existed through the regulations for many years, as outlined in a previous section of this report. Evidence gathered during the inquiry process, and explained in other sections, indicated that there has been a lack of clarity in the interpretation of what religious education was expected to accomplish, what form it should take, and whether or not it was even a necessary area of emphasis.

Some individuals are opposed to religion and any form of religious education or the teaching of organized religion. In support of their position, they refer to examples of violence, hatred, prejudice and conflict which they attribute to religious differences. These characteristics are evident in the study of the history of mankind since its beginning. It does not appear to be the position of historians that these problems were always, or only, generated by religious differences. In some cases, that would appear to be one of the contributing factors. As with religious intolerance, perhaps a more defensible position in explaining some of the background of violence, hatred, prejudice and conflict, could be the existence of ignorance, lack of knowledge and a lack of understanding.

Arguments supporting religion and favouring the development of religious literacy have been put forward by several organizations such as the Ecumenical Study Commission, by groups and by individuals as well. Their arguments supporting religious education are:

(a) It is impossible to understand the history of Canada, the history of Ontario, or the history of any nation, without reference to the role played by religion. "The study of the role played by religion in the life of this country, both past and present, is an integral and important part of Canadian studies. Indeed, no real understanding of the forms and values of Canadian society is possible without a knowledge of the diverse religious convictions, organizations and experience that have substantially shaped this society....One simply cannot grasp the social, political, educational and cultural development of this country unless one knows something of the many faiths represented in its history, the accomplishments and conflicts they brought, and their multitudinous effects. Religion has, in fact, played such an important role in the developing history of Canada that any failure to take the religious factor in its full dimensions into account in Canadian studies would distort such studies beyond recognition. If we want to know ourselves, we must be familiar with the nature and background of the Canadian religious experience." [38]

(b) It is not possible to understand current national and international events, their underlying causes and their significance without a knowledge of religion and the role that religion plays in these affairs.

(c) Religion is a major force in shaping the culture of any group of people. In order to have an understanding of the various religious and cultural groups which make up the society of Ontario today, it is essential to be knowledgeable of their religious beliefs and traditions.

(d) It is not possible to fully understand literature, art or music without some knowledge of religion. The expression of religious ideas and emotions through themes or other connotations is an integral aspect of these creative subjects.

(e) The study of religion has been a legitimate academic pursuit since education had its beginning. Formal education began as a thrust of the organized church and originally took place in religious buildings. Its purpose was to prepare or play a major role in the preparation of future leaders who would assume prominent leadership roles in the religious communities. The development of universities in Ontario can be attributed to the influence of religion. Many were started under the auspices of Christian denominations whose main objective at that time was to foster their Christian faith among the students who attended.

(f) Religion is part of human nature and part of the total human experience. It is not possible to exclude the religious or spiritual aspect when looking at the totality of human nature.

(g) Religion is the most effective vehicle for developing an understanding of the purpose and meaning of life. In the research study reported by Bibby and Posterski, [39] more than 40% of the 3,600 teenagers surveyed across Canada identified the question of the purpose of life as one of their major concerns. The survey also revealed that, although teenagers are not particularly enthused about religious organizations, approximately 70% of them have clear religious and spiritual interests. Education that does not take into account the spiritual dimension of human nature is incomplete. In order to prepare youth for some of the challenges that will confront their generation, it is critical that they have experiences that will encourage them to confront and develop their spiritual reality, whatever that may be, and to respect that same dimension in others. Students need to learn how religion has provided a meaningful framework within which answers to the ultimate questions in life may be provided for human beings.

The perception appears to exist that public schools have abandoned any attempt to develop the spiritual dimension of students. That perception often extends to the conclusion that schools other than the public schools are successful in this area and that the spiritual dimension is a more conscious and effective part of their curriculum.

The educational process is designed to develop the "whole" child. It is expected to be a co-ordinated attempt to nurture the intellectual, physical, emotional, social, moral, and spiritual growth of each child as a human being. If the educational system is to be all encompassing and comprehensive in nature, no one growth dimension can be omitted. The spiritual dimension is an important part of the total growth experience, and education must play a significant role in that process. The major catalyst in the curriculum for achieving this spiritual growth is effective religious education.

Although the spiritual is very difficult to define, it is somewhat easier to describe what it involves. "The spiritual area is concerned with the awareness a person has of those elements in existence and experience which may be defined in terms of inner feelings and beliefs; they may affect the way people see themselves and throw light for them on the purpose and meaning of life itself...but always they are concerned with matters at the heart and root of existence." [40]

Beck also talks about spirituality and what it involves. "A spiritual person is characterized not only by intense and profound inner experiences but also by all or most of the following traits: awareness, breadth of outlook, a holistic outlook, integration, wonder, gratitude, hope, courage, energy, detachment, acceptance, love, gentleness...Spirituality...offers hope for a long overdue rapprochement between religious and non-religious groups in this important area of education....It focuses on extremely important personality characteristics that have been neglected in the schools...Spirituality is very similar in religious and non-religious contexts, so the approach to fostering spirituality is very similar in each case. World views are explored, aspects of life are experienced, and tried paths are pursued in order to attain the awareness, integration, wonder, acceptance, love, gentleness, and so forth which are the hallmarks of spirituality...Spiritual education can draw heavily on the best in intellectual and cultural education, aesthetic education, values education, social education and the like...We may be surprised at how much the school can do to foster spiritual growth. In any event, the school undoubtedly can and must play a part...The serious, systematic study of the religions of the world should also be a substantial component in spiritual education, for religious and non-religious students alike." [41]

The spiritual and religious aspects of life are part of the essential make-up of human beings. Many of the submissions received during this inquiry process have emphasized this concept and have used it as a basic rationale in support of religious education in the public elementary schools. The general nature of these submissions is basically the same in terms of philosophy, and the essence of that can be captured by citing quotations from several of them.

> The ESC believes that religious education is an essential part of the education of young people in Ontario...students need a conceptual framework to assist them in appreciating the cultural mosaic in which they live.... In an educational context, students are encouraged to consider the meaning of religion in the lives of those who practise it and to develop ways of understanding and examining the phenomena of religion. [42]

An Anglican deanery and an Anglican church offered the following comments:

Curricula used in Ontario Public Schools should take into account all dimensions of human experience. One of those dimensions has been the religious or spiritual aspect. Students should be encouraged and helped to appreciate and to evaluate this dimension in terms of their own lives and in terms of its role generally in the whole human endeavour. Students should be exposed to the past, present and future of religious and spiritual tradition in order to completely understand the total mosaic of our culture and that of the world. [43]

It is very important that students be aware of the religious dimension to life. Individuals and a society are not complete without a system of fundamental beliefs.... Not only is the knowledge of religion part of a complete education but such knowledge is necessary for a complete understanding of other subjects.... Religious education is an exploration of an important dimension of people's lives. It does not attempt to instill or change beliefs. It should not even attempt to convince students that religious belief should be part of their lives. [44]

A board of education expressed a similar opinion.

Students must be encouraged to understand how the belief systems of the world's religions as well as the world views associated with atheism, agnosticism and humanism provide individuals and communities with meaning and a sense of purpose. Religious education is the natural place in the curriculum to discuss these issues of life meaning. [45]

The United Church also addressed this concept.

Students, if they are to understand what it means to be fully human, must be provided with the opportunity to understand religion and the role it plays in lives of individuals as well as in the life and history of a civilization. It is essential for students to know that religion is a widely shared human experience and that, even though religion takes on a great many forms and manifestations, there are also many similarities. If religion is a fundamental component of a child's life and the life of her family, it is important for her to know that she is not alone. At the same time, it is important for students to know and respect that many persons do not belong to a religion or to a religious institution, and that they organize their lives with alternative principles and philosophies. [46]

Education in religion is a process to help students develop a growing understanding of religion as an important phenomenon in contemporary society and in history. Also it gives the opportunity for students to consider the kind of question with which religions deal and a chance to develop the skills necessary in handling and discussing them. [47]

An ad hoc committee emphasized the importance of religion in a student's growth.

While it is not the aim of a religious education program to lead the child to particular religious choices or decisions, this may be the result of such a program. This is legitimate when the child has been presented with a fair, reasonable and authentic exposure to the phenomena of religion...whether or not it results in particular choices or decisions, it does contribute to the student's growth in understanding and his/her general wholeness as a person. Religion offers particular insights on the meaning and purpose of life. [48]

Dr. Harry Fernhout stated that:

> Education which excludes religious education cannot claim to be complete. Public education in Ontario seeks to provide opportunities for each student to develop all dimensions of his or her person, and seeks to provide a fair and honest introduction to reality (the world) as these students encounter it. Education which excludes religious education falls short on both counts. Religion is pervasive in human history and culture....Humans have the capacity for spiritual expression, and...education must take this human capacity into account. [49]

Support for religious education was expressed by the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada.

> While it may appear inviting, in the name of fairness and tolerance, to eliminate religion in the public school system...the result of such an egalitarian approach would be to feed false information to students about the history and nature of Canadian society. Also, without a sound religious education program in the public schools, students will lose the opportunity to develop insights on how to better understand the nature of spirituality and later, as an adult, will be deprived of those life skills which are required in making choices about what to believe. [50]

An organization of parents expressed strong support for religious education.

> Children, particularly younger children, are in the process of developing a world view, philosophy of life and a personal value system whether they realize it (or even we realize it) or not.... Children often view the school as the primary source of knowledge sometimes even transcending the place of parents. Therefore, religious education in the school can have great impact on the thinking of children and ultimately the adults they become. We want that capacity for reflective and introspective thinking to be nurtured in the public school system. [51]

Various non-Christian organizations voiced their support for appropriate religious education in the schools.

> We propose that there may indeed be classes in the public school system dealing with religion.... The crucial, indeed essential, element of any course dealing with religions is that it must deliberately set out to inculcate mutual respect and understanding. [52]

> If done properly, the inclusion of religion...will contribute to a climate of tolerance and understanding. [53]

> Our children should be encouraged to recognize the value and unity of both faith and reason and to become part of a creative process of investigating reality and recognizing truth, irrespective of its origin. Only when children develop such a world-minded, truth-seeking attitude can they use their abilities constructively toward the creation of a just, peaceful and harmonious society. [54]

> A study of religions and religious practices is an integral part of the study of human development and history of mankind....Knowledge of religions and their principles broadens one's mind and makes the student a more mature participant in the society.... Religious education improves the moral and ethical values of the student and makes him a 'better' person....Religious education from an early stage of schooling can promote greater understanding and cooperative living among the multicultural members of the Ontario population. [55]

> The teaching and learning of religions and moral values should be an integral part of curriculum and the educational program of Ontario public schools. A course in religion should help children understand their own faith as well as to appreciate the broad principles of other major faiths as they relate to personal identity, ethical living and mutual goodwill among all people. [56]

The concerns of trustees were evident in the many submissions received from the provincial association and individual boards.

> The Ontario Public School Boards' Association believes that knowledge about religions...has an appropriate and beneficial function in the public schools of the province. Learning about religions, in a way that is comparative and stresses similarities, can teach tolerance and promote understanding. [57]

> Religious education aims neither to generate nor erode religious faith, but rather to give young people, whatever their religious or secular background - the opportunity to explore and reflect on religious ideas, responses, activities and attitudes in an educational context. [58]

Statements similar to those already referred to in this section could be included from other briefs received during the inquiry process. Support for religious education came from a variety of sources, including individuals, educators, school systems, religious organizations, church organizations and special interest groups.

Rationales for religious education exist in educational jurisdictions where the curriculum has, for some time, included religious education as a topic of study. Excerpts from the documents of five different jurisdictions provide some examples of this.

> Indeed, there is a growing concern which is reaching ground swell proportions among educators, editors and statesmen that unless the religious motive for character and conduct has a rightful place, an important element in education will be lacking. [59]

> Religion is a way of life; it is a way of looking at life and of facing life's basic questions. People in all ages and in all places have found their religion to be of great importance to them. When children have the opportunity to look at life from a religious point of view and begin to understand religious insights, it is possible for their own lives to be enriched by the experience. Religious belief is very important because it gives rise to attitudes towards ultimate reality, to the world, to other people and to oneself....An understanding of religious belief enables children to develop a better appreciation of the world and what happens in it. Christianity has been of great importance in shaping British history, institutions, art and culture. It continues to be a living religion and a knowledge of it helps children to understand the society in which they are growing up....There are a number of other major religions which are increasingly influencing both culture and institutions....Awareness of these faiths and practices is growing. Knowledge and sympathetic understanding of the religions of their fellow citizens helps children to learn to live together in harmony. [60]

> Religious Education is a unique and vital element in children's learning, although growth in religious development is a lifelong process which is never complete. For each pupil, the process may involve several influences, of which the school is an important one.... Children bring to school something of themselves and something of their home and culture which teachers can develop. In this way, the nurture and education of home and school complement each other. The distinctive contribution of Religious Education in schools is to encourage informed study of religious issues and considered reflection upon experience. Schools provide a general education in religion for all children whatever their background. This includes an understanding of one's own position and an appreciation of other viewpoints...The subject is also concerned with developing sensitivity and a general knowledge, understanding and awareness of all things religious. [61]

> There are many good reasons why the study of religion should be part of the curriculum of all schools. Such a study helps pupils to understand better their own cultural heritage and the variety of beliefs and customs of people living around them; it provides insights into the role of religion in international affairs and exemplifies how men and women of all nations have been inspired by their beliefs. Some people see its importance in the contribution it makes to the moral and social education of pupils, especially in terms of consideration for others and respect for fairness and justice. Religious education has an important part to play in the pursuit of all these desirable goals. There are, however, two very distinct contributions that the study of religion has to make to the general education of pupils. The first is the systematic development of an understanding of religion. It attempts to achieve this by exploring different religions...and by drawing on them in the search for answers to those fundamental questions on which religions and philosophies have a view. Secondly, in the light of this knowledge and enriched experience, it helps young people to identify and foster those personal values, allegiances and commitments that are beginning to take shape in their hearts and minds. [62]

> Religious education is seen as an educationally valid component of the school curriculum, ...directed towards developing a critical understanding of the religious and moral dimensions of human experience...to enlarge and deepen the pupils' understanding of religion...by exploring all those elements in human experience which raise questions about life's ultimate meaning and value. This involves informing pupils in a descriptive, critical and experiential manner about what religion is, and increasing their sensitivity to the areas of experience from which a religious view of life may arise. It should stimulate within the pupils, and assist them in the search for, a personal sense of meaning in life, whilst enabling them to understand the beliefs and commitments of others. [63]

Other sources of support for religious education programs in the schools can be cited:

> Our young people need very much to know why particular religious-minded individuals and groups think and act the way they do. Ultimately, study of these religions and their followers will bring greater tolerance, respect and admiration of diverse peoples and diverse religions. [64]

The Mackay Committee Report in 1969 identified the importance of religious education.

> We do, of course, recognize that a general knowledge of religion is necessary to form a well-educated person....We take the view, notwithstanding, that it is an essential function of the educational system to instil knowledge about religion, as well as to develop the ideals, attitudes, and values derived from our heritage, of which religion forms so great a part.... History, literature, art and music cannot be understood or appreciated without an adequate background of religious knowledge. Equally important are the ethical values inherited from religion. [5]

One of England's foremost authorities on religious education has stated that:

> Religion is too important a part of the history, culture and current experience of mankind to be left to believers alone. There is a role for the school in preparing pupils to take an informed and thoughtful part in a pluralistic society. When the society contains not one but several religions, the need for a thoughtful study of religion becomes greater, not less. [6]

It is interesting to note the comment on religious education from the Commission on Private Schools.

> The Commission believes that the provision of religious education in our schools has the potential to provide a basis, not only for the understanding of one of the most significant aspects of human experience but also for the development of tolerance and understanding...the present requirement is potentially beneficial to a multicultural society particularly as we in Ontario strive to understand the many parts that make up the social whole. In this context, a programme using new materials, a new guideline and presented from a comparative perspective might be a small but meaningful step in the development of tolerance and understanding within the province. Therefore, the Commission recommends:
>
> 47. That the Ministry of Education develop new materials for the religious programmes required in the board of education elementary schools and that such programmes be (a) non-confessional in nature and (b) developed from a comparative perspective.... [7]

Barrow focuses on the past and the potential contribution of religion to our society.

> Subjects that are agreed to have desirable social consequences, direct or indirect, to develop the mind, or to be central to our way of life have a strong prima facie case for being taught. Clearly religion as a cultural fact has determined the path of history more than any other factor and has done so very profoundly; it has shaped our way of life and continues to do so--even to some extent for those who have no faith. But not only does it account for much of the past and explain much of the present, it also continues to be a potent sociological phenomenon...we may refer to the potential of religion to provide social cohesion, personal comfort, sense of purpose, and inspiration to an extraordinary degree. Lastly, if one wishes to enhance one's understanding of humanity and its history, one ought not to be ignorant of so potent a force as religion. [8]

It is also interesting to note that there is an increasing amount of support for religious education in the United States as well.

> After decades of shunning classroom discussion of religion, fearing that it was too divisive a subject or that church-state separation might be breached, many American public schools are now moving to incorporate it into their curriculums. The change results largely from a sentiment that schools have too long ignored religion as a force in American and world culture....Conservatives are drawn to the cause by a belief that the absence of religion carries an implicitly anti-religious message; liberals by a belief that learning about religious diversity strengthens pluralism. [69]

A national organization in the United States has developed a policy statement regarding the study about religions.

> Religions have influenced the behavior of both individuals and nations, and have inspired some of the world's most beautiful art, architecture, literature and music.... Knowledge about religions is not only a characteristic of an educated person, but is also absolutely necessary for understanding and living in a world of diversity. Knowledge of religious differences and the role of religion in the contemporary world can help promote understanding and alleviate prejudice....Omitting study about religions gives students the impression that religions have not been and are not now part of the human experience. [70]

In the landmark case in the United States involving Abington v. Schempp, the United States Supreme Court declared that teaching about religion was not only lawful but desirable in the public schools. In writing the majority opinion in this particular case, Justice Tom Clark also argued that..."it might well be said that one's education is not complete without a study of comparative religions or the history of religion and its relationship to the advancement of civilization. It certainly may be said that the Bible is worthy of study for its literary and historic qualities. Nothing we have said here indicates that such study of the Bible or of religion, when presented objectively as part of a secular program of education, may not be effected consistent with the first Amendment." [71]

Another national organization in the United States has taken a strong position on the issue of religion in the public schools.

> Because religion plays a significant role in history and society, study about religion is essential to understanding both the nation and the world. Omission of facts about religion can give students the false impression that the religious life of humankind is insignificant or unimportant. Failure to understand even the basic symbols, practices and concepts of the various religions makes much of history, literature, art, and contemporary life unintelligible.
>
> Study about religion is also important if students are to value religious liberty, the first freedom guaranteed in the Bill of Rights. Moreover, knowledge of the roles of religion in the past and present promotes cross-cultural understanding essential to democracy and world peace. [72]

The extensive rationale from such varied sources is an indication of the strength of support that exists for religious education as part of the school curriculum. There is a strong link between education and religion. Education involves learning. The formal education process involves learning about the world in which we live, about the people who live in our world, and about events that have shaped our society and our lives. Religion has been a major influence in every society, and that is certainly no less the case in our country. The heritage of Canada, and the heritage of all individuals who now call themselves Canadians, have been influenced by religion or by events in which religion has been a factor.

It is difficult, therefore, and in some cases almost impossible to understand the development of our Canadian heritage, or the heritage of other cultures, without reference to the role that religion has had in the development of that heritage. Understanding and appreciating the multicultural and multifaith nature increasingly characteristic of Canada today requires a knowledge of religion.

Understanding many of the major world events that occur daily, and of which we are made vividly aware through the media, is impossible without some knowledge of the world's major religions. A full understanding and appreciation of art, music, or literature, is not possible without some knowledge and awareness of the religious perspectives frequently reflected in these creative works.

It is important for students to learn about every dimension of human experience, including the religious. They need opportunities in the curriculum to learn how religious commitment has served humanity by providing a framework within which the meaning of life and fundamental questions relating to life can be appropriately addressed and more adequately understood.

In every relationship, and especially in that between a teacher and a student, there is something that can be referred to as religious education. It is the transmission of ideas, or answers to significant life-related questions, or it is the exemplification of values by "precept and example". There is no way to avoid such an interaction and the learning experience associated with that relationship over a period of time. It is important, therefore, to determine what the "formal" curriculum for addressing these issues really is, or should be, in order to be appropriate and successful.

If truth, respect, justice, fairness and equality are desirable qualities which the home and religious communities expect children to acquire, then the educational system should reflect those virtues and values in everything it does. This includes the way children learn to deal with issues concerning people, regardless of their cultural background, with whom they share the world.

Section 7.0

OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 From the information generated by the questionnaire completed by public school boards and from discussions with trustees and board staffs, it becomes obvious that religious education does not receive a great deal of attention in Ontario's public elementary schools. Less than 5% of the 712,000 students represented by the boards completing the survey receive a regular program of religious education. Over 70% of these students receive no religious education at all. The remaining 25% receive non-regular religious education ranging from some to none at all, depending upon the will of the school staff.

It is clear that religious education is not a priority subject in most of Ontario's public elementary schools. It also is obvious that, in general, the pertinent subsections of Section 28 of Regulation 262 are not being implemented. All boards do not feel compelled to adhere to the regulations regarding religious education, since many of them do not request exemption from providing religious education programs, yet still do not offer the program as required by law.

7.2 Various reasons are offered to explain the lack of emphasis on religious education in public schools. The most predominant reason is the lack of curriculum guidelines and resource materials. The lack of leadership and initiative at both the provincial and local levels is frequently cited. The growing controversy surrounding the issue combined with the lack of a clear, safe direction in which to go are frequently mentioned. Doing nothing generates little if any controversy in most systems, and avoids the potential "stirring of the pot" by openly discussing an issue on which there is no consensus or general agreement.

In recent years, there has been a growing emphasis on other program areas, and their inclusion in a busy timetable has meant that programs considered to be of lesser importance either have received less emphasis or have been omitted entirely. Religious education is one of those programs. The absence of religious education, however, has not created any strong public reaction, so there has been little pressure at the provincial or local levels to have it reinstated. This reason is frequently supported by the comment that there is a general apathy toward religion in today's society anyway, and that is reflected in the lack of leadership offered in this area by politicians and educators.

Even in educational jurisdictions where there has been an attempt to provide religious education, there is often a lack of agreement on the form it should take and what the program should be. These disagreements reflect the confusion regarding the philosophy, rationale, purpose and content of a religious education program for public elementary schools. In school systems where there has not been a discussion of religious education, an awareness of the controversy in other systems serves as a meaningful reason to avoid raising the issue. In addition, "war stories" from other jurisdictions in the province regarding the reaction of parents to particular religious education programs have acted as deterrents.

Finally, the lack of adequate teacher preparation also has been cited frequently as a reason to explain the lack of emphasis on religious education. Many teachers have no qualifications in religious education. They do not feel competent to deal with a subject for which there are no ministry guidelines, no program outlines, and inadequate resource materials.

7.3 There is confusion regarding the purpose of religious education in the curriculum of the public elementary schools. That confusion has been created, to some extent, by perceptions of what has been occurring in schools. For the most part, religious education has involved learning about Christianity through Bible stories and Christmas and Easter celebrations. It should not be concluded that this has not served some meaningful purpose, nor should it be concluded that this approach has not generated problems for some people.

The absence of a policy statement on religious education outlining a philosophy, a rationale, a purpose, aims and objectives, etc., has allowed this confusion to exist and permitted it to grow into a controversial topic that has caused people to adopt firm positions, often resulting in divisions within a community. These positions are considered valid by those who hold them because of their perceptions of what the purpose of religious education in the schools really is.

7.4 The confusion surrounding the purpose of religious education is manifested in the use of the two terms "religious education" and "religious instruction". They often are interchanged as synonymous terms when the topic of religious education in the schools is discussed. The two terms never have been clearly defined in ministry documents or earlier program guides. Section 28(4) of Regulation 262 states that "two periods per week of one half-hour each shall be devoted to religious education." In subsections (7), (8), and (9) of Section 28, reference is made to "religious instruction". The potential for misunderstanding and confusion does exist, even within the regulation itself.

There is a pedagogical difference in the meaning of the two terms. When this difference is clarified, it is not feasible to interchange the two because the intended outcomes for each are quite different and imply significantly different approaches in order to achieve their intended goals.

For purposes of clarification in this inquiry, and as outlined in a subsequent recommendation, "religious instruction" has been defined as:

> a methodology designed to nurture and perpetuate a particular set of religious beliefs, attitudes and behaviours.

For additional clarification at this point, it would appear helpful to identify a definition for religious education.

The definition for the term "religious education" that has served as an underlying principle during this inquiry is:

> the acquisition of knowledge and awareness enabling individuals to understand, appreciate and respect various religious beliefs, attitudes and behaviours.

When either of the two terms is used, individuals who attach their particular meaning to it will have different perceptions from those who attach a different meaning to the term. The result can only be further misunderstanding, confusion and disagreement. Clear definitions and further clarification of the intended purposes of each are both very necessary.

7.5 In Ontario, religious education is the only subject identified in the regulations, under the Education Act, as compulsory. It also is the only subject for which an exemption provision appears in the regulations. In legal cases involving religious education in both Canada and the United States, the issue of exemptions usually arises as a factor.

Future decisions of the courts will determine the legal status of the regulations pertaining to religious education. Clarifying the intent of the regulation on religious education and the intended nature of the program, however, could contribute either to the outcome of that legal process, or to the implementation of the decision.

An appropriate regulation and the correct interpretation of the regulation could remove a major reason for the existence of an exemption clause, namely, the nature of the program.

The exemption provision provides a legitimate "escape" from an unsatisfactory or undesirable situation. While the exemption does provide an alternative solution, it also creates additional problems, and avoids the basic problem which necessitated the request for exemption. It is more realistic to address this basic problem and resolve the issues which contributed to its existence. The exemption provision then could be removed to provide an approach to religious education that is consistent with other subjects, some of which also are controversial.

7.6 Ontario appropriately can be called a pluralistic society. Many different cultures are represented. The public school system is a system open to all. It is expected that it will represent the viewpoint that is characteristic of Canada as a whole, yet, at the same time, not overlook or destroy the unique cultures represented by various students within the system or within the province.

The nature of the society served by the public education system in Ontario is a significant factor in determining what the system should be like. It is also a major factor in identifying the nature of the curriculum in general. Curriculum documents in Ontario have reflected this in recent years with the emphasis on multiculturalism and learning about other cultures as well as one's own. The Formative Years, which sets out a curriculum policy for the primary and junior divisions, states that children will be given opportunities to "understand his or her own nature and needs as a basis for understanding the nature and needs of others", or "appreciate the development of civilization through the ages and understand and respect customs, institutions, and the historical background of diverse social groups and communities", and "begin to understand and appreciate the points of view of ethnic and cultural groups other than his or her own". [73]

The programs in the public education system must be designed to meet the needs of students from a diverse society. The same requirement must exist for any program in religious education in the public system. An appropriate program in religious education can and should include education about Christianity but it cannot be limited to that. It must go further to include education about religion in general, and about other major world religions in particular.

7.7 There is a definite need for an appropriate program in religious education in the public elementary schools, and there is strong support for a program, from individuals, groups and organizations. Learning about religion is a necessary dimension of the educational process and the development of each child. One's education is not complete without some knowledge about religion. Religious education is necessary for the development of awareness and understanding, the nurturing of attitudes of respect, appreciation, acceptance and sensitivity that will contribute to more harmonious and positive relationships among individuals, regardless of race, culture, religion or creed.

There is evidence of religious intolerance in many areas of the world. Daily news items make one aware of this reality. There is also evidence, however, of religious intolerance within Ontario and an appropriate religious education program in the public elementary schools could prove to be one effective way in which this problem could be addressed over the long term.

7.8 A religious education program appropriate for the public elementary schools must be educational in nature, and not religious instruction. There must be no attempt or perceived intent to convert or proselytize, but rather to provide an education about religion that will contribute to open, inquiring minds, enabling children to deal with the important questions of life in general, and religion in particular. The public school cannot be a forum for those who wish to convert individuals to any one religion or to a particular religious way of life.

The public school system must adapt to a new role which, while allowing it to make a valuable and necessary contribution to awareness and understanding about religion, does not interfere with the fundamental right or freedom of religion granted to the individual.

7.9 Whenever the topic of a religious education program arises, the reaction usually is predictable. There is considerable support for the concept of religious education, but there are fears and concerns expressed about various aspects such as the intended purpose of the program, the nature of the program, the inclusion of information about other religions, the potential for student confusion, the undermining of the faith of the home, and the inability of teachers to present the program.

These problems can be resolved successfully. The same issues have been dealt with in other jurisdictions, and there is evidence in education systems such as Birmingham, Bedfordshire and Warwickshire in England, to name only three, that an appropriate program of religious education can be developed to meet the intended objectives successfully, and yet avoid the kinds of problems voiced also by parents in those areas when the programs were originally implemented.

Many of the concerns are based on assumptions. These assumptions need not become real issues, and with careful planning, they will not materialize. Ontario already has some experience in introducing aspects of other religions into the public system through the revised regulations regarding opening exercises. There are some favourable and positive reactions already, as a recent newspaper article referring to Harbord Collegiate in Toronto indicated. "While educators, parents, clergy and politicians debate whether religion should have any part in the school system, students at this inner-city school halfway between Chinatown and Little Italy aren't sure what all the fuss is about." [74] Comments made by the students include "All religions are basically the same", and "The prayers are what people all want, regardless of their faith. It's pretty amazing to find so many similarities between religions."

There is a way to resolve the issues successfully. The anticipated fears and concerns can be avoided. The education system in Ontario has the expertise, the skills, and the ability with which to meet these challenges.

7.10 The introduction of a successful and appropriate program in religious education will not occur in the public elementary schools of this province simply with a change in the title of the subject or with revised regulations. There is a definite and pressing need for specific direction to be provided in the regulations regarding the subject, but to support the regulation, there is also a critical need for a carefully planned comprehensive Ministry of Education policy statement. This document would need to outline the underlying philosophy, rationale, principles, aims, objectives, nature of the content, and teaching strategies to provide adequate direction and guidance to systems in the development of programs for implementation.

Without this kind of comprehensive document, along with support in other forms, it would be unrealistic to expect educational systems to address and overcome the challenges that currently face them in this subject area.

7.11 During the inquiry process, an alternative suggested by some individuals and groups was that government funding should be extended to include support for private or alternative schools operated by religious organizations. The government has a document entitled "The Report of the Commission on Private Schools in Ontario", which was received in October, 1985, following a comprehensive and detailed study of the various aspects involved in that issue.

The Mackay Committee report of 1969 contained the following statement on this same issue:

> Some persons...recommend that government support be given to parochial or private schools operated by particular religious groups. We rejected this as destructive of our great democratic school system. [75]

This inquiry agrees with and supports this particular position taken by the Mackay Committee. To extend funding would cause further fragmentation of the public system, which, although not without weaknesses and areas requiring improvement, has served the people of Ontario well.

Section 8.0

RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 *EDUCATION ABOUT RELIGION SHOULD BE COMPULSORY IN THE CURRICULUM OF PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN ONTARIO.*

It is necessary to challenge the place of any particular subject in the school curriculum. No subject should be included unless it can be supported by a defensible rationale. If there is a defensible and legitimate reason why a particular subject contributes to the achievement of acceptable and desired outcomes, then it should be included. If there is no defensible rationale, it should not be included.

Perkin [76] suggests that there are three appropriate criteria to be applied when considering a subject for inclusion in the existing curriculum:

(a) does the study assist the student to understand his or her environment?

(b) does the study assist the student to understand himself or herself?

(c) does the study assist the student to cope in the contemporary world?

The study of religion will help children understand the religious traditions of life and thought that they will encounter in their lives. It also will help children to be sensitive to, and more aware of, the ultimate questions posed by life, and to the dimensions of mystery and wonder that underlie all human experience. Religious education can help pupils to better understand those with whom they come in contact, through an improved understanding of their cultural heritage, their beliefs and their customs. It can also help to explain the actions of men and women inspired by their particular religious beliefs, which in turn, will provide insight and understanding of the role of religion in world events.

Education is a nurturing or growth process designed to provide knowledge, skills, and understanding in a broad range of disciplines and in an environment where moral values and desired qualities of behaviour support the formal process of education. It is impossible to provide a comprehensive education without religious education.

An educational system cannot be neutral. If there is no religious education or any form of religion in the schools, then secular humanism, by default, becomes the basic belief system. Secular humanism does not represent a neutral position. Priestly says that it "implies the abolition of religious options. And there would appear to be some secularism at work in the world of education.... Secularism...is a narrowing process which can only lead to a new sort of bigotry, and a secular bigotry which would ban altogether the exploration of religion in schools, may be every bit as bad as a religious bigotry which would permit no other viewpoint." [77]

The public education system has been, and must continue to be, founded upon a system of beliefs or principles, and those beliefs and principles are conveyed to those who are involved in the system.

To remove religious education from the school system, or to have no religious education program, also conveys a strong message that religion is not important in the total development of individuals, or in the values and principles upon which society is based. It also would suggest that religion has not played a role of any significance in the history of our country or in the development of other cultures to which reference frequently will be made in various topics and subjects in the curriculum.

Two of the goals of education established for Ontario schools (Appendix I) represent an implication for religious education in schools. Goal #10, "develop esteem for the customs, cultures and beliefs of a wide variety of societal groups", implies an awareness and understanding of the religious customs and beliefs as well of the various groups which comprise our society today.

Goal #13, "develop values related to personal, ethical or religious beliefs and to the common welfare of society", is even more explicit in its implications for religious education. The development of values involves consideration of ethical principles and religious beliefs. The desired outcomes are the development of respect for the beliefs and ideals of others, and the identification and development of personal beliefs and values. These goals cannot be achieved in a vacuum. There must be a deliberate and carefully planned program as part of the curriculum in order to successfully achieve any predetermined goal.

Study about religion can be defended as an educationally valid component of the curriculum in public elementary schools. It is an effective vehicle for developing, enlarging and deepening the students' understanding of religion and the religious dimension of human experience by exploring those aspects of human experience that initiate and also provide answers to questions about the meaning and purpose of life. To neglect this vital aspect would undermine the effectiveness of the educational enterprise. "If the public schools are to provide students with a comprehensive education...study about religions should be a part of the curriculum." [78]

The study of religion in the public elementary schools should be addressed and planned with the following aims in mind:

(a) to help pupils develop a basic understanding of, and respect for, religious practices and beliefs of different cultures;

(b) to foster an awareness of themselves, other people and the world around them;

(c) to develop a positive identity of self;

(d) to develop positive attitudes toward others;

(e) to help pupils develop the ability to express their own feelings and respond appropriately to the feelings of others;

(f) to become familiar with where, how and why people worship, and

(g) to explore and develop an interest in the world around them.

The intent of this program should not be to develop any particular faith position and none of the aims listed suggests that. As Hull has stated, "Preparing pupils to take an informed and thoughtful interest in what goes on around them is by no means the same as nurturing them into faith in one religion or even acceptance...of religion as a whole." [79]

Barrow emphasizes that "We cannot afford to ignore the subject of religion in the schools on the grounds that it is a personal matter and should be left to the family. Nothing that has done so much for good and ill to the human race as religion can reasonably be regarded as purely personal." [80]

The need to address this issue is urgent. The people of Ontario deserve to have access to a responsible public system of education that recognizes and responds to changing situations in our society. To deny access to such a system or to move in an inappropriate direction has the potential to further fragment the public system. To do nothing would undermine and erode what has been a strong public education system in Ontario. There needs to be a clearly defined policy that acknowledges the place of religious education in the public elementary schools as recognition of the spiritual dimension of the human experience of life. Clive Beck's statement summarized the situation well, when he wrote "One thing is clear, however: it is not acceptable for the school simply to opt out of education in religion and related areas." [81]

8.2 *THE SUBJECT TITLE "RELIGIOUS EDUCATION" SHOULD BE DISCONTINUED AND REPLACED BY THE MORE APPROPRIATE DESIGNATION OF "RELIGION STUDIES".*

The use of the word "religious" appears to have certain connotations for the purpose and nature of the program that should be implemented, especially if the current title of religious education is interpreted to imply educating for the purpose of making one religious, or more religious. On the basis of this interpretation, the purpose of the program becomes that of indoctrination rather than learning about religion.

The tendency in recent years has been to designate curriculum areas with more comprehensive and all-encompassing titles. One example would be Technological Studies which encompasses a wide range of knowledge and skills in the various areas of study about technology. Family Studies is another example of a general title that includes emphasis in a variety of areas in preparing students for many different dimensions of family life. Environmental Studies is a third example of a designated curriculum area that extends beyond one particular area of emphasis to include a more comprehensive view of the several interrelated areas of study that are involved in more fully understanding our environment and its implications.

As in the case of other curriculum areas, such as Technological Studies, Family Studies, Environmental Studies or Computer Studies where the title denotes studies about the various components of each respective area, the designation of this particular curriculum area as "Religion Studies" would denote studies about religion and about the various interrelated aspects of religion.

8.3 *RELIGION STUDIES SHOULD BE DEFINED AS "STUDIES ABOUT RELIGIONS TO PROVIDE KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS ENABLING INDIVIDUALS TO UNDERSTAND, APPRECIATE AND RESPECT VARIOUS RELIGIOUS BELIEFS, ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS".*

One of the problems identified on several occasions in submissions received during the inquiry, or in discussions with individuals, has been the lack in the past of a specific definition to provide a clear indication of precisely what the subject, then called religious education, was intended to be. When the legislation providing for religious education was originally introduced in 1944, there appears to have been little concern or confusion evident at the time. Schools proceeded to implement a program even without any clear guidelines of what it should be. The guidebooks which later appeared did focus on Christianity, but because that was the predominant nature of Ontario's population at the time, no serious challenge of the interpretation of the term "religious education" resulted.

Unfortunately, the absence of a clear definition made it possible, and perhaps it could also be said necessary, for individuals to interpret the nature of the subject in their own way, and to attach to it whatever purpose they believed was most appropriate. The predictable results of that situation have been inconsistency within and among educational systems, disagreements, confusion and polarization of opinions. It is little wonder that "religious education" tended to disappear from the curriculum. It also is little wonder that, during the years, problems associated with religious education have appeared in various locations across the province.

The initial step in implementing any program should be that of clarifying what the subject is, by definition, and outlining clearly the objectives and outcomes that it is intended to achieve.

8.4 *RELIGION STUDIES SHALL BE A NON-CONFESSIONAL AND NON-DENOMINATIONAL PROGRAM ABOUT RELIGIONS.*

Religion in the public elementary schools should be recognized and accepted as a subject of study because of its academic value in contributing to the educational development of students. Education which fails to include the religious dimension is deficient because religion has been one of the most influential aspects of human society and culture. On the other hand, an approach which would focus on religious studies too narrowly, thereby restricting it to specific aspects of religion such as doctrine, or limiting the exposure of students only to the confessional aspect of religion, would not accurately represent what Religion Studies really involves, nor would it be representative of the population that comprises Ontario's school system today.

Religion Studies should not be implemented in schools as an attempt to persuade children to accept any particular religious faith. Rather, it should have as its intent the imparting of information to enable children to learn about religions.

Horder's caution is important.

> It is not the business of the school to tell the children what they ought to believe when society at large is not agreed. It is the task of the school to make the children familiar with the various points of view that are sincerely held and to understand why people hold these views, as accurately as possible. It is the task of the school to help children with the natural search for meaning -- 'Who am I?' 'What is this life all about?' 'Is death the end?' and so on. [82]

The Mackay Committee, in its 1969 report, notwithstanding its recommendation regarding religious education, did offer support for religious education in schools by acknowledging that "a general knowledge of religion is necessary to form a well-educated person. This, however, does not mean that religious indoctrination should take place in the public schools."

The report continued:

> We must distinguish between religion as a subject for study and religion as a manifestation of faith....The public school system has neither the right to try to inculcate religious faith...nor has it the obligation or right to proselytize....The rights of individual conscience must be respected. While obedience to the principles of education requires the school to present for study by all of the children the significant ideas, events and personalities of different religions, this need not become indoctrination. [83]

Clarification to distinguish between teaching about religion and religious indoctrination in public schools is provided by the National Council on Religion and Public Education as follows:

- the school's approach to religion is academic, not devotional.
- the school may strive for student awareness of religions, but should not press for student acceptance of any one religion.
- the school may sponsor study about religion, but may not sponsor the practice of religion.
- the school may expose students to a diversity of religious views, but may not impose any particular view.
- the school may educate about all religions, but may not promote or denigrate any religion.
- the school may inform the student about various beliefs, but should not seek to conform him or her to any particular belief. [84]

Although it has been emphasized that teaching about religion is intended to educate about religions and not to nurture a particular faith or religion, Wm. Gilbert, a clergyman who has researched this subject quite extensively, says that the educational approach to religious education is also a nurturing approach. Gilbert's article goes on to say that

> The educational approach does not seek to nurture participants in a particular faith. It does nurture in other ways. It nurtures them in the view that religion has been and remains an important phenomenon in life deserving of intelligent study. It nurtures them, hopefully, in coming to an understanding and respect for the beliefs and customs of their neighbours. It nurtures them in an attitude towards religion which recognizes that in the real world, it has been and can be, both beneficial and harmful.... It nurtures also by assuming that engagement in such a study will lead to growth, mutual enrichment and greater insight into the truth by all. Finally, it nurtures by its assumption that people make religious decisions and commitments and that it is a good thing when they are based on the broadest possible knowledge and experience. In these and other ways, the educational approach is also a nurturing approach. [85]

From information provided during the inquiry process through letters, submissions and discussions, and by being aware of the resource documents and materials made available to schools from the Ministry of Education since the regulation was originally established, it becomes quite obvious to an observer that, in many instances, religious "education" in the past in fact has been religious "instruction". This inquiry has chosen to define religious instruction as "a methodology designed to nurture and perpetuate a particular set of religious beliefs, attitudes and behaviours". Christianity has been the general focus of the religious education program, and in several cases, a particular denominational flavour appears to have been the basis of the program. It is difficult to reach any conclusion other than to acknowledge that many of these programs did represent indoctrination.

During the inquiry process, considerable concern was expressed by individuals and groups that indoctrination had occurred in religious education programs in the past. In some cases, these individuals were opposed to religious education of any kind because of the fear that indoctrination would continue. In the majority of cases, however, individuals or groups expressed support for a program that would be education about religions, on the expressed condition that it would be educational in nature and not become the nurturing of a particular denomination or faith.

The acceptance of a carefully planned and appropriately developed Religion Studies program, and the integrity which it must have in order to be successful, will be determined to a large extent by a deliberate and conscious attempt to ensure that indoctrination is not intended, not perceived, and not practised.

8.5 *THE RELIGION STUDIES PROGRAM IMPLEMENTED IN THE PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS SHOULD BE BASED ON A MULTIFAITH APPROACH.*

The essence of the rationale offered for Religion Studies in the elementary schools is that children need assistance and support in understanding their own patterns of belief, in understanding the traditions that those patterns of belief reflect, and in understanding beliefs that differ from their own. To achieve the objective reflected in this rationale, children need to become aware of the other religions around them that make up the society in which they live.

Many changes have occurred in Ontario since the days of Egerton Ryerson. At that time, it was essentially a Christian society. But, as the last decade of this century begins, Ontario now is comprised of a population with many religious or secular backgrounds and beliefs.

The public school system, by virtue of its name, is public. The schools that fall within this category belong to all of us in Ontario and are open to all who live in Ontario. As such, they cannot and must not assume the character or position of any particular religion.

Religion represents a statement about the meaning of life. It determines how individuals value themselves and how they value others. All of society is based on certain religious assumptions. Public institutions such as the public school system, however, must respect the various religious beliefs of the society in which they exist, and abstain from promoting any one truth or religion over another.

The public school system is responsible for teaching respect for the various values and religions represented in society, and this respect needs to be reflected in what the schools do, and how they operate.

Christianity is still the predominant religion in Ontario, but it is not an official state religion. In a society composed only of Christians, similarities and differences among the various Christian denominations would need to be recognized. In a society composed of many religious or secular beliefs, not only similarities and differences among the various Christian denominations need to be recognized, but also between Christians and non-Christians. An appropriate religious education policy in Ontario at this time must be responsive to the religious and cultural diversity that has developed in the province during the last few decades.

Hull's comment, based on experiences in the United Kingdom, is that "Religious education has usually been nurtured into the religious traditions and beliefs of the educating society. This idea presents few difficulties when the society is unanimous about its religion.... But if the society is not unanimous about its religion, then there are problems." [86]

In order to develop an understanding of their own patterns of belief as well as beliefs that differ from their own, students require knowledge of the diversity of religions, religious experiences and reasons for various religious beliefs within their society. A multireligious or multifaith approach to a Religion Studies program in the public elementary schools is necessary to provide this knowledge and understanding.

It is important to clarify what is meant by the term "multifaith religious education". As stated by the Ecumenical Study Commission, it means "multifaith teaching about the history and practice of the major living religions and not instruction in a particular faith position. A multifaith approach to religious education respects, as authentic, the faith positions of the many religious communities and is sensitive to the needs and aspirations of a multicultural society." [87]

At minimum, the major living religions that should be involved in a multifaith approach to Religion Studies would be Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism, and Buddhism. Through the decision-making process of the Religion Studies Advisory Committee recommended for implementation by each board of education, additional religions could be selected because of their appropriateness for a particular jurisdiction.

The concept of a multifaith religious education program generates apprehension and concern for some people. There is a great deal of literature to support such a program, and there are also existing programs that offer evidence of the effectiveness with which a multifaith program can be implemented. Based on Mavor's experiences, "the study of a range of religions and the understanding of alternative ways of viewing reality can make valuable contributions to cross-cultural harmony and mutual enrichment. In contrast, ignorance of the integrity of the world view of others can lead to rejection or prejudice -- sometimes to the point of violence." [88]

In the opinion of Koppedrayer,

> Religious education should be education in the fullest sense of the word, that is, education which among other things, deepens students' personal commitment to the process of inquiry. Such religious studies education can address questions of meaning as well as inform about religious traditions. If a curriculum allows for attention to religious values, it must take into consideration the pluralism of Canadian culture and society, and thus not attempt to entrench the faith, doctrine or practice of any one religious community. [89]

Anxieties have been expressed that an open pedagogic acknowledgement of other religions threatens the Christian roots of this country. However, it has been demonstrated by psychologists and others who have worked in the area of education and multiculturalism that open toleration does not threaten self-identity. The experience of several religious studies professors supports the view presented by Koppedrayer "that students' personal commitment to a religious tradition is enhanced by knowledge of other religious traditions, rather than undermined". [90] Professor Bryant makes a similar observation by stating "that the anticipated fears of those who oppose the concept of a multifaith religious education program in the public school curriculum do not materialize with the introduction of such a study". [91]

One of the concerns expressed during the inquiry was that having children learn about religions other than their own would result in confusion. This assumption is made without an awareness and understanding of the nature of the program, the topics or concepts involved, or the manner of presentation. Effectiveness in any subject demands a carefully planned program that is based on sound educational principles. The development of knowledge and skills must proceed logically and sequentially. At all levels, concepts and topics must be carefully selected to be age appropriate and suitable for the stage of development of the students. What children learn in Religion Studies would evolve naturally from what they encounter in the world around them. Within this framework of educational philosophy and methodology, there should be no cause for confusion.

An awareness of other religions helps an individual to better appreciate and understand his/her own religion. Learning about forms of government in other countries of the world cannot help but develop an individual's appreciation of democracy and the opportunities that we enjoy in this country. The same appreciation can be fostered by learning about other religions. Singh believes that Christianity would benefit from this approach.

> Christianity, as well as other religions, stands to benefit more from being studied in the context of world religion than from being isolated in the curriculum....Christianity has never been studied adequately in our educational institutions....In adopting a multifaith approach, students are likely to gain a more balanced and complete understanding of Christianity than in the past.

> In a multifaith society, children (and adults) need to acquire an understanding of each other's faith. Thus, while the 'Christian' child needs to acquire an understanding of the religious heritage and outlook of his own faith, and of those of minority groups, so immigrant or ethnic children need to understand the religious heritage and religious outlook of the 'host' society, as well as to understand the teaching and practice of their own faith. [92]

An article by Whaling supports this view.

> Christians everywhere are coming to realize that they are theologically unequipped for living in a global world unless they take other religions seriously....Religions are not only trying to understand one another better, they are also learning from each other more and more....There are therefore excellent reasons thrown up by Christian theology itself for the study of other religions. There is the increasing realization that one can only truly be a Christian in 1986 in the knowledge that there are others around who are Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and Buddhist. Understanding and loving them can make one a better Christian; dialogue with them can help to create a fuller global world; passing over into them and coming back can renew one's own insight and vision. [93]

In a pluralistic society such as Ontario, a major educational goal must be the development of respect for and acceptance of ethnic and religious differences. A multifaith religious education program is an effective approach for reaching that goal. In striving to reach that goal, however, individuals must have the right to hold and practise beliefs which, for them, represent the truth.

A multifaith approach is not intended to interfere with anyone's personal beliefs. The public school system has no right nor mandate to undermine or denigrate the faith position of the home. By the same token, it has neither the right nor the mandate to endorse or nurture any particular religion.

In the legal case involving Zylberberg et al v. The Sudbury Board of Education, the essence of the majority judgment of the Court of Appeal, released on September 23, 1988, was that the religious practices of the majority cannot be imposed on religious minorities. It no longer can be assumed that Christian practices are acceptable to the whole community. The state no longer may give primacy to the Christian religion during opening exercises in the public schools. This decision was based on an interpretation of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and now stands as the most recent decision in this case. It does represent, however, an important reference when considering other situations where religion is involved, especially religious education in the public elementary schools.

A multifaith approach to Religion Studies does not give primacy to any one religion. It does permit education about various religions, with the intent of developing respect and appreciation for the beliefs of others, as well as becoming more knowledgeable and appreciative concerning one's own beliefs. The multifaith approach to Religion Studies recommended by this inquiry does recognize the Christian heritage of Ontarians, while also recognizing that other cultures and religious traditions now form an important part of our society as well.

8.6 *THE NATURE AND CONTENT OF A RELIGION STUDIES PROGRAM MUST BE CONSISTENT WITH DESIGNATED AIMS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES.*

All programs in Religion Studies for elementary school pupils should be designed to achieve certain fundamental aims. These general aims are:

(a) to help children develop an increased awareness of their own identity and worth;

(b) to help children understand and appreciate their relationships with other people;

(c) to promote an understanding of religion;

(d) to help children understand the nature of religious beliefs and practices, and

(e) to help children understand what religion means in the lives of the believers.

To provide direction in the development of programs and to acknowledge the sensitive nature of the subject, the objectives, content and methodology in Religion Studies programs must be consistent with the following fundamental guiding principles:

(a) Religion Studies is an essential part of the educational development of children.

(b) Religion Studies attempts to develop an understanding of religion, not to nurture a particular religious faith or indoctrinate.

(c) Religion Studies seeks not only to impart knowledge, but also to develop an understanding of religious experiences, feelings and attitudes.

(d) Religion Studies is complementary to family and organized religion, rather than in opposition to, or a substitute for either.

(e) In the Religion Studies program, no one religion is assumed to have a position of primacy.

(f) Christianity will be one of the major living religions included in the program, but other religions also will be studied to increase understanding of our multifaith society.

(g) To be educationally acceptable, Religion Studies must be characterized by open enquiry and awareness of prejudices. It should help children to appreciate that religion offers a distinctive interpretation of life, and encourage them to think honestly for themselves about their own beliefs and values.

(h) Both content and methodology in a Religion Studies program should be age appropriate and consistent with the approach and philosophy followed in any other subject within the curriculum.

In planning the format and content of a multifaith Religion Studies program, it is important to begin with the experiences and backgrounds of the pupils and to build on that information and experience. Through this approach, children can start learning about various aspects of world religions from their earliest years in school. Beginning with the responses of children to birthdays, christenings, weddings, and special religious occasions, an awareness of religious experiences can be developed. The phenomena of religion, or more concrete data about religions involving religious signs and symbols, sacred places, religious festivals, sacred writings and religious customs, represent important concepts in the developmental process of learning about ways in which religion is expressed in the life of an individual or a religious community.

The role of the phenomena of religions is described more fully in an article by Holm, [94] on implementing this kind of program in primary grades. The author explains that talking about the phenomena of religions in the context of the children's experiences is a reminder of three important characteristics of religions. Firstly, they are not just sets of beliefs and practices written down in books. They are lived by people. Simply telling the pupils about a prophet of the Muslim faith is not enough. They need to enter imaginatively into the life of a Muslim family in order to understand what Islam is like in practice, and especially how it affects the children in that family.

Secondly, when a religion is being talked about, we are really talking about someone's faith, so it is necessary to treat it as we would like to have our own faith treated by others. Children must be helped to see it from the point of view of the person who holds that faith, and to realize that it is very important to that person.

Thirdly, religion is not a separate matter, but is intertwined with the culture of those individuals who practise it. For that reason, the religious aspects such as beliefs, worship, etc. should not be isolated in the classroom. All those aspects of the culture through which religion is expressed, such as food, dress, customs, dance, music, etc. should be included.

Through a developmental process progressing from the concrete to the more abstract, from the familiar to the unfamiliar and from the known to the unknown, the Religion Studies program will develop the pupils' understanding of the ways in which major religions are similar, the ways in which they are different, what it means to be a follower of each major religion, and what is expected of a believer in a major religion.

An effective Religion Studies program will not just be the transmission of information and facts. It must go beyond that to provide understanding that initiates further thinking, discussion, reflection and questioning. It should be expected to generate questions, because this is a fundamental part of the learning process as further information is sought to extend or complete understanding. Neither the questions nor the responses should be censored, or the learner will be deprived of information that is necessary for complete understanding. By the same token, there must be no attempt, in the information provided in the program, in discussions, or in responses to questions, to prescribe what the learner should believe. That is not the responsibility of the school system, nor is it within the general aims identified for a Religion Studies program.

8.7 *THE EQUIVALENT OF SIXTY MINUTES PER WEEK SHOULD BE DEVOTED TO RELIGION STUDIES DURING THE COURSE OF A SCHOOL TERM.*

The existing regulation states that "two periods per week of one-half hour each shall be devoted to religious education". A total of 60 minutes per week appears to be the minimum amount of time required to achieve the aims identified for this important curriculum area.

There is a need for some flexibility in the way in which this total time is allocated, however, in order to accommodate special circumstances in the program and in the scheduling. Some events, such as festive occasions or special religious celebrations, may require more than the allocated 60 minutes for activities during the week. Provision needs to be made for this flexibility in scheduling events, if they are considered appropriate in the implementation of an effective program.

The flexibility for adjustments in the allocation of time to accommodate extenuating circumstances can be provided by specifying that the average amount of time devoted to Religion Studies over the course of any one school term will be the equivalent of 60 minutes per week.

8.8 *OF THE TOTAL TIME ALLOCATED TO RELIGION STUDIES DURING EACH SCHOOL TERM, A MINIMUM OF ONE-THIRD OF THE TIME SHALL BE BASED ON CHRISTIANITY, A MINIMUM OF ONE-THIRD OF THE TIME BASED ON OTHER RELIGIONS, AND THE EMPHASIS FOR THE REMAINING ONE-THIRD OF THE TOTAL TIME SHALL BE DETERMINED WITHIN EACH INDIVIDUAL EDUCATIONAL JURISDICTION.*

As the Canadian census figures outlined in a previous section of this report indicate, the predominant religion in Canada has been and continues to be Christianity. It is the religion which, up to now, has most influenced our culture, given rise to social institutions, and served as a basis for moral codes and patterns of behaviour. It is a religion that exists in many forms throughout the world.

Its influence in Canada's history has been significant. Many letters and briefs identified and emphasized the importance of this Christian influence in Canada's development. Many also included as an argument for their particular positions in support of Christianity that the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, as Part I of the Canadian Constitution adopted by the Parliament of Canada in 1981, begins with the statement "Whereas Canada is founded upon principles that recognize the supremacy of God...."

Many individuals, in their input to this inquiry, have strongly expressed their concern that our Christian heritage may be lost. They have taken the position that anyone growing up anywhere in Canada, and in Ontario in particular, should learn and understand something about the Christian faith, whether that is their particular chosen faith or not, because without that understanding, it is not possible to appreciate the history, literature or culture of Canada, nor of the world in general.

The merit of this argument must be acknowledged, but the same rationale can be applied as an argument to support learning about other world religions as well. Canada is becoming home to more and more people of various cultures and backgrounds. Interaction between individuals of different countries and cultures, through business or tourism, is increasing rapidly. In Ontario, our society will continue to become more multicultural in nature, and as that occurs, all of us will experience more and more religious diversity around us. This may be more evident in larger urban areas, but even in smaller communities comprised of fewer ethnic groups, awareness of the diversity of cultures in the world and in our society will continue to increase through the news media, television programs, movies and literature.

One of the greatest challenges facing us over the next few decades will be the need to live and work harmoniously with people of different races, cultures and religions. Ontario today is a pluralistic society in which many diverse religious beliefs, traditions and understandings exist within the same community. Christianity continues to be a predominant religion, as has already been stated, and its influence on many of our traditions and social institutions is evident.

Increased evidence of the existence and influence of other religious traditions and beliefs is apparent, however, and it is this change in the makeup of our society which helps to emphasize the need for a more balanced approach to a study about religion as a vital component of the educational curriculum. Rather than attempting to foster any particular religious viewpoint or faith position, the Religion Studies program for today's needs should attempt to develop a critical understanding of the moral and religious dimensions of humanity. This can be achieved by drawing on human experiences, traditional belief systems and the ways in which religion is expressed in the lives of different individuals within society, or within a particular community.

Our cultural heritage, as Canadians, does need to be preserved. This will be ensured by devoting a minimum of one-third of the total time allocated to Religion Studies to Christianity. By the same token, children also need to learn about other major world faiths because many events in today's world have been or are being influenced by them. These various faiths are represented in our pluralistic society through fellow Ontarians with whom we come in contact on a regular basis. As Priestly says, "Pluralism is the acknowledgement that a variety of value systems or fundamental viewpoints exist within a particular society. This includes the religious. We live in such societies." [98]

Our heritage, as Canadians, now includes this wealth of cultural diversity, and it is important for students to become aware of this so that they may appreciate its significance. By devoting a minimum of one-third of the total time allocated to Religion Studies to religions other than Christianity, this understanding, appreciation and respect should occur.

The idea that each local system should decide what religions should be included in a program was put forth by some individuals and groups. To subscribe to this principle would be an abandonment of the rationale for Religion Studies. Regardless of the location of the community in Ontario, children in each community need to be equally well prepared to live in and cope with the pluralistic environment in which they will find themselves in the future, even if such is not their current environment. For the majority of children, their careers as adults will be pursued in parts of the province, the country or the world apart from the community in which they were raised. It is inevitable that they will experience the cultural and religious mosaic of today's world in one form or another, wherever their adult lives may take them, and in anticipation of that experience, it is important that they develop an awareness and understanding that will prepare them as adequately as possible.

The concept of providing some opportunity for decision-making at the local level should not be dismissed, however. Based on the religious composition of a particular community, or special circumstances that might contribute to an emphasis that should be placed on one or more faiths, an educational jurisdiction should be given an opportunity to determine the balance of content. By providing for the emphasis for the remaining one-third of the total time allocated for Religion Studies to be determined by an acceptable process within each individual educational jurisdiction, these special needs can be addressed. Overall, the students will become more aware of various world religions and better understand the influence that religions have had in shaping our world. They also will recognize the existence of the variety of expressions of religion within Ontario and the similarities that exist among various religious faiths.

8.9 *A POLICY STATEMENT FOR RELIGION STUDIES, GRADES 1 - 8, SHOULD BE DEVELOPED BY THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION.*

One of the major concerns expressed by school boards about the issue of religious education in schools was that, unlike other areas of study, the Ministry of Education has provided no guidelines or direction regarding what should be taught.

To outline for boards what should be taught in schools, the Ministry of Education issues curriculum guidelines for grades 7 - 12/OAC and policy statements for kindergarten to grade 6. At the present time, there are three policy statements from the ministry about the curriculum in elementary schools, grades 1 to 6. They are The Formative Years, Circular 14 and Science Is Happening Here. Numerous support documents in specific subjects have been provided, however, and school boards use these materials to develop local programs. None of these documents provides any direction for religious education.

Grades 7 and 8 are part of the intermediate division. Courses for these grades are developed by boards from curriculum guidelines issued by the Ministry of Education. There are no such guidelines for religious education.

It is the intent of this recommendation that a policy statement for Religion Studies for grades 1 to 8 be developed and issued by the Ministry of Education. This policy statement would outline the expectations that should be used by school boards in developing programs in Religion Studies.

It is intended that this policy statement would contain:

(a) the general philosophy and guiding principles for the program;

(b) the program aims, objectives, and areas of emphasis for the primary division, the junior division, and for grades 7 and 8;

(c) a discussion of the general characteristics of pupils in each of the primary, junior, and intermediate divisions. This would include pupils' interests, stages of intellectual, social, emotional, cultural, physical and moral development, and learning styles of students and the implications for Religion Studies;

(d) a discussion of the learning environment that should be established for Religion Studies;

(e) teaching strategies;

(f) suggestions for themes and topics, and

(g) suggestions for assessment by the teacher in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

The Ministry of Education document Science Is Happening Here is a good example of a comprehensive policy statement for elementary schools, and the same format is recommended for Religion Studies.

8.10 ***THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION SHOULD ESTABLISH A TASK FORCE TO PROVIDE SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A POLICY STATEMENT DOCUMENT FOR RELIGION STUDIES IN THE PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.***

Following Ministry of Education and government support for a Religion Studies program in the public elementary schools, the next major task will be the development of a sound, comprehensive curriculum policy statement for Religion Studies by the Ministry of Education. This document will be expected to provide clear direction and guidance for the subsequent development of programs by the various education systems. It will be a critical contributing factor in ensuring that the Religion Studies programs are acceptable to the parents, educators and religions represented in the public system. The policy statement must be developed through a process that gives consideration to all potential implications of the program and to the importance and necessity of reducing potential barriers to general acceptance and public approval.

A task force should be established by the Ministry of Education to provide assistance to ministry personnel involved in the development of a policy statement, and to serve also in an advisory capacity. In addition to ministry personnel, the task force should include representatives of the major world religions, educators, trustees and the general public. The decision of the ministry regarding the size of the task force should be determined by the extent of efficiency and effectiveness observed during previous experiences with working groups of this nature.

The task force should be convened immediately to provide sufficient time for it to conclude its work not later than October 30, 1990. Policy statements from the ministry should then be available to those systems electing to participate in the pilot projects not later than February 1, 1991.

8.11 ***A SERIES OF PILOT PROJECTS IN RELIGION STUDIES SHOULD BE INITIATED FOR SEPTEMBER, 1991.***

These projects, as an important part of the developmental process, would involve the trial implementation of a program in Religion Studies in elementary public schools over a two-year period. Not more than six interested boards of education should be involved. These pilot projects should be funded by the Ministry of Education in accordance with similar projects undertaken in the past.

Through an appropriate monitoring process co-ordinated by the ministry, a carefully designed evaluation plan should be part of the pilot project process to provide the kinds of information necessary to serve decisions both during and after the projects. Information should be gathered to help determine the resources available and/or required, appropriate in-service programs for staff, costs involved in the program, and areas where program improvements and modifications should be made. Decisions regarding course content, areas of emphasis and teaching strategies also would be served by the evaluation data gathered.

Provision should be made to allow a board of education to begin the pilot project process before September, 1991, in the event that a system might be interested and adequately prepared to do so.

8.12 ***FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF A RELIGION STUDIES PROGRAM IN ALL PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN ONTARIO SHOULD BE IN PLACE NOT LATER THAN THE 1993-1994 SCHOOL YEAR.***

New programs in the past have been developed and implemented within concentrated time-frames. The factor that tends to determine the length of the time-frame is the urgency of the need. With a sufficient period provided for preparation and long-term planning, a new program can be scheduled for implementation at a specific date.

A target date not later than the 1993-1994 school year provides an opportunity for the proposed pilot projects to be completed in various jurisdictions. During the same interval, the development of a Ministry of Education draft policy statement can be completed, with final revisions as appropriate based on evaluation data from the pilot projects.

The three-year period would also provide an opportunity for boards to implement an initial series of in-service programs for staff in preparation for the implementation of the program. Existing resource materials could be collected and used during the in-service. Additional resource materials could be generated using available sources of expertise.

8.13 *APPROPRIATE METHODS OF IMPLEMENTING THE RELIGION STUDIES PROGRAM IN THE PRIMARY AND JUNIOR DIVISIONS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED DURING THE PILOT PROJECT PROCESS.*

There are different methodologies which might be considered for use in implementing the Religion Studies program in the elementary schools.

(a) The program could be entirely segregated as a separate and distinct subject addressed during a pre-scheduled portion of the timetable.

(b) Another method would be the integrated approach. This would involve an attempt to integrate pertinent subject matter into other subject areas such as history, geography, music, literature or drama.

(c) A third method would be the incidental approach which infers that topics and issues are addressed when and if they arise in other contexts.

The Religion Studies program proposed by this inquiry has a definite purpose, and a clear, defensible rationale. It will have specific objectives or outcomes that the program is intended to achieve. A specific area of need and importance in the overall educational development of students is addressed through a program such as the one proposed. Successfully meeting these expectations demands that a particular body of knowledge be made available as the program unfolds, to ensure that awareness and understanding of the concepts occur as planned.

The subject and the methodology cannot be approached casually. There must be an active ongoing program carefully planned and designed to achieve the predetermined objectives and outcomes. The program must be developmental and each stage must build on the ideas and concepts learned in previous stages so that an organized accumulation of knowledge and information results. There must be a co-ordinated approach -- one that takes the learner from concept to concept in a sequentially organized format.

An incidental approach to this program would be completely unsatisfactory and ineffective. Incidental teaching becomes accidental, in that it only occurs if the topic is raised during the course of a lesson or a discussion.

Two potential instructional approaches for implementing this program would be either as a segregated subject, or through the integrated approach. During the pilot project process, a careful focus on these two approaches to implementing the program should occur.

Religion overlaps into several different subject areas such as literature, art, history and music. Advantage can and should be taken of this interdisciplinary approach whenever possible, but it should not be assumed that Religion Studies can be adequately addressed through the interdisciplinary or integrated approach alone. There is a need for an identified period of time scheduled exclusively for Religion Studies when aspects of religion can be examined and explored through an organized approach to ensure that the various concepts requiring understanding can be sequentially and systematically addressed.

Integration demands a sophisticated level of teacher skill to ensure that the essential body of content is included and integrated in meaningful ways with other topics and concepts. In the case of Religion Studies, the sensitivity of the issues, the "newness" of the program and the difficulties associated with a successful integrated approach in any curriculum area should be carefully considered in deciding on the method of implementation.

Several alternatives should be examined and tested. It may be that an integrated approach in the primary division (grades 1-3) should be considered as a long-term goal for the future, but not an immediate goal at this time. An integrated approach might not be considered appropriate for the junior division (grades 4-6) at any time. For the intermediate division, Religion Studies definitely should be a segregated subject and dealt with separately.

For the primary division and perhaps the junior division, gradual movement toward integration in ways that would leave the subject content clearly identifiable and recognizable, while still adhering to the direction provided in the policy statement, might be considered as revisions in programs and methodologies occur during the regular curriculum revision process. Initially, however, retention of Religion Studies as a separate identity under the direction of a comprehensive policy statement appears desirable until the integrity and credibility of the new program have been clearly established.

Consideration also should be given during the pilot project period to a variety of approaches including the experiential and thematic approaches in Religion Studies. These methods are familiar to many teachers. Themes on topics such as people, dress, food, buildings and symbols provide a focus for developing information about various religions. These themes have been used in other jurisdictions and an examination of the curriculum materials used in some of those systems will provide a more comprehensive overview of these and other methodologies.

8.14 *THE STUDY OF CHRISTIANITY IN THE RELIGION STUDIES PROGRAM SHOULD REFLECT THE BROAD TRADITIONS OF CHRISTIAN BELIEF WITHOUT BEING DISTINCTIVE OF ANY PARTICULAR CHRISTIAN DENOMINATION.*

The purpose of a program in Religion Studies is not to convert but rather, through the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, to open the minds of the students to the questions that they ask about life and about any religion.

The public school system represents all the cultures, traditions and religions of the society that it serves. It cannot become a forum for those who might wish to advance the cause of a particular faith or to convert some or all of the students to their own particular religious faith position. It is a forum for learning about religion, learning about the role of religion in the lives of people either now or in the past, becoming familiar with some of the traditions characteristic of particular religions, and learning what particular religions mean to their believers.

As in the total program of Religion Studies, it is important that those portions of the program pertaining to Christianity be carefully designed to avoid either promoting or criticizing any particular belief position. It also should be designed to acknowledge and accept that some or all of the students in the program will bring with them certain assumptions and commitments based on the particular faith positions of their homes or religious communities. It is important to ensure that there will be no attempt to interfere with or alter these positions during the program.

As specified in the current regulation, topics of a sectarian nature shall be avoided. Consistent with the approach to all the religions, Christianity should be treated as a world religion, and the approach to its study should assume that all the students are outside the traditions of Christianity.

Shepherd emphasizes this aspect also.

> Teachers, even if they are Christians themselves, do not teach as though their pupils are Christians too, and do not use their teaching to try to persuade their pupils to become Christians. In the same way, teachers could teach about Marxism or Monetarism, Islam or the Incas without seeking to convert to the set of beliefs under discussion or allowing their own beliefs about the subject to distort a fair presentation....This descriptive, objective stance to the teaching of Christianity does not imply that the teaching should be strictly at the levels of fact and thereby dull and arid. The study of a religion or of aspects of a religion such as its worship or ethical code should involve the learners in exciting sorties into 'what it means to be...a Christian, a Jew, a Muslim', etc.
>
> They make sorties; they do not...travel into and settle down in the religion they are studying. They always return to the educational base camp where no assumptions are made. The evidence of classroom experience is that most pupils appreciate this approach, even to their own faith. It exercises their imagination, their empathy, their powers of evaluation and helps them deepen their understanding of their own religious or non-religious positions and the positions of others. [96]

8.15 *NO PUPIL SHOULD BE REQUIRED TO BE SUBJECT TO A RELIGION STUDIES PROGRAM WHERE THE PARENT/GUARDIAN OF THE PUPIL APPLIES TO THE PRINCIPAL OF THE SCHOOL WHICH THE PUPIL ATTENDS, FOR EXEMPTION THEREFROM.*

The exemption provision for pupils has been part of the regulations pertaining to religious education for several years. The perception and observations of some parents about the religious education programs provided in the public elementary schools where their children were enrolled have given them reason to request exemption from the program for their children. In many of the arguments and discussions involved in the issue of religious education, the need for exemption and the implications of exemption have been controversial topics.

This issue came before the Mackay Committee in the late 1960s, and was referred to in its report as follows:

> It has been suggested to the Committee by several briefs that although the present course of study may appear to leave children open to Protestant religious indoctrination, the provisions for exemption of those whose parents object to the teaching offset the exposure. It is our view...that this special treatment is in itself discriminatory and should as far as possible be eliminated from the public school system....It is important to see clearly where the responsibility in this situation lies: contrary to popular belief, discrimination is not the problem of those who are discriminated against, but of the 'smug majority' who permit the practice, and who alone have the power to end it. The public schools must surely be kept free of prejudices if society as a whole is to advance towards their elimination. Every course or program in the public school should be designed to be acceptable to all reasonable persons, and consequently, leave no justification for discriminating exemptions. [97]

Similar suggestions were made to this present inquiry to the effect that parents who object to current programs in religious education, or who might find programs emphasizing Christianity to be unacceptable, have the right to seek exemption for their children. For the same reasons as outlined in the aforementioned section of the Mackay Committee Report, this inquiry emphasizes that a religious education program, and other programs as well, should be designed so that the need for exemption is not considered necessary by reasonable persons.

Section 15(1) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms states as follows:

> Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental disability.

In the Zylberberg et al v. The Sudbury Board of Education case, this fundamental principle appeared to be one of the significant issues identified in the majority judgment in reference to Regulation 262:

> We consider that s.28(i) also infringes freedom of conscience and religion in a broader sense. The requirement that pupils attend religious exercises, unless exempt, compels students and parents to make a religious statement. We agree with the Mackay Committee that the effect of the exemption provision is to discriminate against the religious minorities. [98]

In the legal case involving The Corporation of the Canadian Civil Liberties Association and Others v. the Minister of Education and Others, the Reasons for Judgment includes the following:

> If the object of the Regulation was the teaching of comparative religions, it is difficult to imagine a parent wanting his or her child exempted and it is even more difficult to imagine the Ministry acceding to such request. If ignorance is the basis of intolerance, then clearly learning or education is the remedy, not exemption. [99]

Notwithstanding any of the arguments cited herein, this inquiry recommends that an exemption provision for students should remain as part of the regulations. Historical situations have generated definite perceptions and feelings about religious education that will not disappear quickly, if ever, for some. With the provision of a Religion Studies program for the public elementary schools of the nature proposed to serve the outcomes identified, there should be no need for a request for exemption.

For extenuating circumstances not perceived or anticipated by this inquiry, however, there should continue to be an exemption provision to safeguard the fundamental right and freedom of religion belonging to each individual.

It is anticipated that this exemption provision would rarely, if ever, have to be exercised, and might eventually disappear from the regulation so that Religion Studies might be considered as an essential part of the curriculum like all other subjects. The greater the emphasis on the educational aspect of Religion Studies and on a program that is broadly based and balanced, the less likely it is that parents will be concerned and apprehensive about their children being subjected to an inappropriate or unacceptable form of religious education.

It is also recommended that any exemptions be included as information provided to the Religion Studies Advisory Committee, for its consideration.

8.16 *RELIGION STUDIES PROGRAMS SHOULD BE TAUGHT BY CERTIFICATED TEACHERS.*

The elementary school teachers of Ontario are professionals. To be certified as a professional teacher requires intensive academic preparation, specialized knowledge, and considerable teaching practice. However, the process does not stop with certification. Teachers continue to develop their skills through additional academic and professional courses, professional development workshops and conferences, professional journals, and most importantly, experience.

Teachers understand and are able to deal with the various complexities of teaching, such as different learning styles, individual differences, and the needs of special students. Also, one cannot minimize the importance that a teacher's regular day-to-day contact with students has on the learning process. School is not a series of isolated lessons. A school is a vibrant community where staff and students work together to provide the best possible learning environment. It is a place where learning is a continual process built into all activities and nurtured by caring teachers. For these reasons, the regular classroom teacher, a consistent member of the school community, is best qualified to impart knowledge to students.

The proposed Religion Studies program will be a new program for many schools. Like all new programs, it will require teacher in-service programs, resources, and effective leadership to be implemented effectively.

Religion Studies, however, like other new programs introduced in the past, should be taught by the professionals, the elementary school teachers. This does not preclude the involvement of non-teachers as resource personnel in the Religion Studies program to complement the regular classroom teachers.

As Robert Jackson has said, any teacher is expected to "operate professionally within school -- to educate rather than to indoctrinate". Furthermore, he adds:

> The craft of teaching religious education lies not in neutrality (not revealing your own views and avoiding issues of truth) but in impartiality. In being impartial, teachers can draw on their own commitments and experiences as resource material together with those of others, whether they are religious figures of quality from past or present, the experiences of children from religious backgrounds who are in the class, or of people encountered on visits outside the school to churches or other sacred buildings. All of these are potentially rich sources of religious and spiritual experience. Being impartial does not require the teacher to deny his or her faith but demands the professional integrity of balancing it with the views of others, of managing open discussion of the issues raised and expecting pupils to arrive at a range of conclusions.
>
> Many teachers of religious education operate in this way and feel no conflict between their personal religious commitment and their professional responsibility to an open, academically rigorous approach to the subject. [100]

Legitimate concern has frequently been expressed to this inquiry about the lack of adequate teacher preparation for teaching Religion Studies. The need for appropriate teacher training and in-service programs is acknowledged as an important issue, and is addressed in another recommendation with suggestions for consideration over the long term. Current classroom teachers, however, could be prepared to initiate this program within the time period proposed, with a basic in-service program.

As noted by Horder, "the Religious Education teacher does not need to be an expert in every aspect of religious study and every subject touching on religion. He needs to know enough to deal with the 'minimum body of knowledge' required by all pupils and to be able to branch out enough to satisfy the interests of the pupils and to equip them with the key skills, concepts and attitudes...." [101]

8.17 ***THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION SHOULD AMEND REGULATION 269, SCHEDULE E, TO INCLUDE RELIGION STUDIES, AND FACULTIES OF EDUCATION SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO MAKE AVAILABLE A THREE-SESSION ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATION COURSE FOR RELIGION STUDIES (GRADES 1 TO 8).***

Traditionally, the three-session additional qualification courses allow teachers to concentrate in a particular area of the school curriculum. The focus for the first session is the classroom program, where teaching strategies, unit development, and resources are studied. The focus for the second session is the school program, and the focus for the third session, or specialist session, is the board program. Specialist or honours specialist qualifications are necessary if a teacher is to be appointed as a program consultant.

According to Regulation 269, the basic qualification for enrolling in additional qualification courses is an Ontario Teacher's Certificate. For some courses, such as French as a Second Language, faculties of education require that the candidate demonstrate prior knowledge about the subject before enrolment is permitted. However, many of these three-session courses assume that the teacher has some prior knowledge about the subject, either acquired during formal education or through practical experience. Religion Studies is somewhat unique in that it requires a special body of knowledge not previously acquired by most teachers in their elementary, secondary, or post-secondary education. Not only will teachers have to learn how to teach Religion Studies, but in certain areas many of them also will have to learn what it is they are going to teach. Most teachers will need a course on content, as well as the traditional sessions on philosophy, aims and objectives, methodology and evaluation. Therefore, it is a recommendation of this inquiry that the first session of the proposed three-session additional qualification course for Religion Studies focus on content.

In providing the three-session additional qualification course, the faculties of education will play a major role in the development of local expertise and in the in-service programs of teachers.

As has been stated, this three-session additional qualification course also will qualify teachers, who complete the specialist portion of the course, to become program consultants. Religion Studies is a new program and, as such, requires expertise and leadership that a consultant can provide to ensure that programs are implemented successfully.

8.18 ***FACULTIES OF EDUCATION SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO MAKE RELIGION STUDIES A REQUIRED COMPONENT OF THE FOUNDATION COURSES FOR PRIMARY/JUNIOR/INTERMEDIATE (7, 8) DIVISION PRE-SERVICE TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS.***

One of the recommendations of the inquiry is that Religion Studies be taught by the regular classroom teacher. Many of the individuals and groups who made presentations to the inquiry made this a very strong recommendation.

Religion Studies is going to require special attention at the faculties of education because until the proposed Religion Studies program has been in place for several years, many of the students entering the faculties will not have had any course in religion in their elementary, secondary, or post-secondary schooling.

This means that the approach to Religion Studies should be different from other elementary school subjects. For example, in mathematics methods classes, the instructor can assume that all the students have completed at least Grade 10 mathematics, and therefore have some content base with which to work. This content base in Religion Studies will not exist for many students, and the teacher education program should make provision to compensate for this.

8.19 ***THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION SHOULD PROVIDE DIRECTION AND FUNDING TO SUPPORT IN-SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES IN RELIGION STUDIES FOR TEACHERS.***

It has been strongly recommended to the inquiry, by many groups and individuals, that Religion Studies be taught by the regular classroom teacher. If the teachers currently in the classroom are going to assume these tasks they will need in-service training. Teacher in-service programs in Religion Studies have added significance because, although Ontario's teachers are highly qualified and experienced, most of them have not received training in the teaching of Religion Studies.

It also must be recognized that since Religion Studies programs will vary from board to board, the needs for teacher in-service programs will also vary from board to board and from region to region.

It is anticipated that the direction and funding for in-service programs provided by the Ministry of Education would have three components:

(a) provincial programs that would be beneficial to most teachers, principals, and superintendents;

(b) regional programs designed to meet the needs of groups of boards or all boards within a region, and

(c) individual board programs designed to meet local needs.

The following are some suggested activities:

Provincial Programs:

(a) The Ministry of Education is encouraged to collaborate with professional organizations to host a major provincial conference on Religion Studies. The conference would serve to expose Ontario educators to the religion studies experts from across Canada and around the world. It also would provide a forum for the best provincial programs to be shared and discussed.

(b) Any program that is to succeed must have the support of board superintendents and principals. To recognize this fact, the ministry should organize special workshops on Religion Studies for superintendents and principals.

(c) The ministry should provide funding assistance for regional conferences on Religion Studies.

(d) Educational and religious organizations should be asked to develop an inventory of resource people for teacher in-service programs in Religion Studies. The ministry should publish this information and distribute it to school boards.

Regional Programs

(a) Regional office staff should assist in the co-ordination of regional conferences.

(b) The ministry should provide special funding to groups of boards within a region to support the development and implementation of innovative projects for teacher in-service training.

(c) Regional office staff should co-ordinate the sharing among boards of human resources for in-service programs.

(d) Regional office staff should assist in the co-ordination of in-service programs provided by the faculties of education.

Local Programs

The ministry should provide special grants to individual school boards to support the development and implementation of innovative projects for teacher in-service programs.

8.20 ***BOARDS OF EDUCATION SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO APPOINT TEACHERS WITH EITHER SPECIALIST OR HONOURS SPECIALIST QUALIFICATIONS IN RELIGION STUDIES AS SOURCES OF EXPERTISE IN THE ELEMENTARY PROGRAM.***

The Religion Studies program will have a significant impact in each school system. Every classroom and every student will be affected by the program. Parents will have a special interest in the program and will want to learn more about it as it develops. Trustees will need to be informed and have opportunities to learn about various aspects of the program as important background information required for making decisions.

It will be very important for school systems to have individuals with expertise in Religion Studies within the system to provide leadership in addressing the various challenges that can be anticipated. For this reason, in their recruiting procedures each year, boards of education should appoint some teachers who have specialized training in Religion Studies. These individuals, with either specialist or honours specialist qualifications, will be able to assist the system in general ways, and individual schools in specific ways.

Their expertise and leadership would be vital in several different areas related to the program. They would be particularly helpful in working with the Religion Studies Advisory Committee, in the budgeting procedures, in co-ordinating the development and implementation of the program, in organizing and providing in-service programs, in co-ordinating available resource materials, and in responding to inquiries, concerns and questions regarding the program.

Boards of education have provided co-ordinators, subject specialists and curriculum resource personnel in many other subject areas. In the same way as provision for leadership and expertise has been implemented in these other subject areas, similar provision should be made for the same quality of resource personnel in Religion Studies.

8.21 ***THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION SHOULD PROVIDE FOR RESOURCE PERSONNEL WITH EXPERTISE IN RELIGION STUDIES IN EACH MINISTRY REGIONAL OFFICE.***

The education officer designated as resource person would:

(a) facilitate implementation by clarifying Ministry of Education expectations and policy;

(b) co-ordinate co-operation among boards, the Ministry of Education, faculties of education, OISE, regional organizations, and other appropriate groups in the region, in the development and implementation of programs;

(c) work with resource personnel in other regional offices to promote the sharing of resource lists and exemplary programs among school systems in Ontario, and

(e) design and activate a regional program for monitoring implementation at the board level.

8.22 ***EACH PUBLIC BOARD OF EDUCATION SHOULD ESTABLISH A RELIGION STUDIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE.***

Religious education programs in Great Britain have been facilitated and supported in many cases by advisory councils with representation from several groups according to interest areas. Their function has been to give advice and to serve as a "check and balance" mechanism that will contribute to the effectiveness and success of the religious education program.

The Religion Studies Advisory Committee of each respective board would be a standing committee. Its function would be to advise the board upon those matters connected with Religion Studies referred to it by the board. It also would provide advice to the board on any matter associated with Religion Studies which the committee itself considered appropriate at any time.

Included in the advisory responsibilities of this committee within each board would be:

(a) approval of the programs in Religion Studies developed for use in the elementary schools within the board's jurisdiction;

(b) determination of the emphasis for the undesignated one-third portion of the total time allotted to Religion Studies;

(c) revisions in the Religion Studies programs used in the board's elementary schools, as determined from time to time by changing circumstances, and

(d) the preparation of an annual report for the board on the status of Religion Studies within the board's jurisdiction, developments of significance during the year, and suggested action based on identified needs.

8.23 *THE RELIGION STUDIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE SHOULD CONSIST OF FOUR REPRESENTATIVE GROUPS.*

The composition of the Religion Studies Advisory Committee should reflect the particular groups that have a vested interest in the Religion Studies program. The four respective groups should be:

(a) lay persons from those religious groups which most appropriately reflect the major religions within Ontario;

(b) recognized clergy from those religious groups which most appropriately reflect the major religions within the board's jurisdiction;

(c) trustees and professional staff of the board of education for the jurisdiction, and

(d) the associations representing teachers whom the board of education determines should be represented.

The members and number of members of each representative group should be determined by the group that they represent.

The length of term served by the members of each representative group should be determined by the group that the members represent.

8.24 *ON ANY QUESTION OR ISSUE TO BE DECIDED BY THE RELIGION STUDIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE, ONLY THE FOUR REPRESENTATIVE GROUPS ON THE COMMITTEE SHALL BE ENTITLED TO VOTE, AND EACH OF THE FOUR GROUPS SHALL HAVE A SINGLE VOTE.*

Each of the representative groups should have equal input in the decisions of the advisory committee. The extent of the input of each group should not be determined by the nature of the group nor the number of members within the group itself. Each representative group is required to arrive at a position that reflects the majority opinion of the group and the one that will be reflected in the vote exercised on behalf of that particular group.

8.25 ***NO RECOMMENDATION OR DECISION SHALL BE FORWARDED TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION FROM THE RELIGION STUDIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE UNLESS IT HAS BEEN DETERMINED BY A MAJORITY VOTE OF THE FOUR REPRESENTATIVE GROUPS THAT COMPRISE THE COMMITTEE.***

The success of the Religion Studies program will be determined by several factors. One of those factors will be the need to develop a balanced, impartial program that does not reflect the philosophy or doctrine of any one interest group only. The advisory committee can serve a useful purpose in achieving this goal only if it operates on the same principle to avoid decisions that might favour one particular interest group over another.

8.26 ***CO-OPERATION AMONG SCHOOL BOARDS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED IN THE AREA OF RELIGION STUDIES.***

Subjects such as mathematics, science, and history, for which programs have been in place for many years in elementary schools, are supported by excellent learning materials and highly qualified professional staff. Since religious education has not been a priority for many boards, there is a lack of learning materials and there is a limited number of teachers holding additional qualifications in religion or religious studies.

In order to help overcome these obstacles to implementation of a Religion Studies program, regional office resource personnel and the provincial implementation team should establish a mechanism for boards to co-operate in the following areas:

(a) the development of programs;

(b) the production of learning materials;

(c) teacher in-service programs, and

(d) program evaluation.

This sharing should be at local, regional and provincial levels, and should not be restricted to the exchange or circulation of paper.

In addition to the areas listed, sharing among school boards might also include:

(a) research that has been done in Canada and England;

(b) the designation of board programs considered to be exemplary and worthy of study by other jurisdictions, and

(c) the provision of assistance to authors and publishers of learning materials for Religion Studies.

8.27 ***TO RECOGNIZE THE ADDITIONAL COSTS INVOLVED IN IMPLEMENTING THE RELIGION STUDIES PROGRAM, THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION SHOULD PROVIDE ADDITIONAL FUNDING TO ASSIST SCHOOL BOARDS.***

Additional funding based on elementary student enrolment should be made available to school boards for the Religion Studies program. The funding should be an amount per elementary pupil. This additional funding should be made available in each year over the initial three-year period when the implementation costs for the program are greatest.

This funding will recognize the additional costs incurred by school boards to:

(a) establish a Religion Studies Advisory Committee composed of board staff, teachers, clergy, and members of the public to assist and support the Religion Studies program;

(b) develop, staff, supervise, and maintain a local program for grades 1 to 8;

(c) provide in-service programs for principals and teachers, and

(d) purchase and/or develop learning materials.

It is anticipated that the major portion of the funding will be used for the in-service training of teachers and principals.

8.28 ***AN EFFECTIVE MONITORING PROCESS SHOULD BE INITIATED BY THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION TO ENSURE THAT THE REGULATIONS REGARDING RELIGION STUDIES ARE APPROPRIATELY IMPLEMENTED IN ALL PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN ONTARIO.***

Effective procedures for monitoring processes and programs should be established by regional office personnel to ensure that the Religion Studies policy is being implemented by all boards. Also, a regional report should be prepared on the status of implementation one year, two years and three years after the distribution of the Religion Studies document. The reports should include:

(a) descriptions of implementation activities occurring in the region, and

(b) suggestions for future modifications to the policy document.

As part of the monitoring process, school boards should be required to file, with the regional office, their plans for the implementation of Religion Studies.

8.29 ***THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION SHOULD INITIATE AND ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING MATERIALS IN BOTH PRINT AND NON-PRINT FORMATS TO SUPPORT THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE RELIGION STUDIES PROGRAM.***

The availability of materials is a critical issue in the implementation of any program. To initiate and encourage an immediate response in the provision of support materials, several approaches should be co-ordinated by the Ministry of Education.

An incentive fund to assist in the development of learning materials, similar to the Learning Materials Development Fund of the 1970s, or the incentive fund recently provided for Ontario's Heritage Language Program, could be established.

A compilation of appropriate materials used in support of similar programs in other jurisdictions should be provided. Of particular interest and assistance would be the materials used in jurisdictions such as Birmingham, Bedfordshire and Warwickshire in England, as well as systems within Ontario where innovative programs are in the process of development. Already within Ontario, there are some resource materials available, but more will be required to support the successful implementation of the proposed program.

A committee should arrange to meet with representatives from various publishing firms or organizations, including TVOntario, to outline the nature of the need and to provide direction, assistance and professional suggestions regarding the nature of appropriate materials required.

8.30 ***THE TRUSTEES OF EACH BOARD OF EDUCATION, THE SUPERVISORY OFFICERS AND THE PRINCIPAL OF EACH RESPECTIVE SCHOOL ARE COLLECTIVELY RESPONSIBLE FOR ENSURING THAT THE REGULATIONS, POLICY STATEMENT AND PROGRAMS PERTAINING TO RELIGION STUDIES ARE IMPLEMENTED APPROPRIATELY.***

Although it might appear obvious that leadership should be provided by the trustees, the supervisory officers and the principals, information gathered during this inquiry process would not indicate that such has always been the case. Notwithstanding the reasons offered to explain this phenomenon, systems that have not requested and received exemption, yet have no regular religious education programs, have chosen to ignore the existing regulations completely.

This action, in itself, conveys a message that can be interpreted in different ways. Those who accept responsibility must also accept the accountability which accompanies the role, and the nature of the issue does not alter that reality.

The major responsibility for ensuring the success of this program must rest with each local system. Given the provision of a clear, specific regulation, a comprehensive policy statement, and supportive funding by the Ministry of Education, those responsible for providing leadership at the local level must ensure that the Religion Studies programs are implemented in all schools. The success of the program will be jeopardized in any system if there is not a sincere and concentrated attempt to adhere to the guidelines provided, and to avoid any program becoming, whether deliberate or otherwise, a forum for indoctrinating students.

Considerable research has been done on school effectiveness. Purkey and Smith, and others, have provided detailed descriptions of the results and major findings of many of the studies of school effectiveness, particularly those undertaken in the United States. The importance of the leadership provided by the principal has been identified as a key factor in effective schools.

Strong leadership has been shown to contribute to more effective teaching and to influence student achievement in positive ways. The leadership role of the principal will be very significant in contributing to the success of the Religion Studies program. To facilitate effective leadership by the principal, supportive and proactive leadership is necessary from the supervisory officials and the trustees in the system.

8.31 *THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION SHOULD MAKE PROVISIONS IMMEDIATELY FOR ADDITIONAL CREDIT COURSES IN RELIGION STUDIES AT THE SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL.*

At the present time, because there are very few programs in religious education in the elementary schools, the demand for credits in courses in religion is minimal at the secondary school level. Patterns of course selection in the senior division tend to be influenced by the courses selected initially in grades 9 and 10, and no courses are available in religion in the intermediate division.

If effective programs in Religion Studies are implemented in the elementary grades, there is a distinct possibility that greater numbers of students will elect to take courses in religion at the secondary level. Interest in the subject will be generated in the elementary grades, and there will be a reason for continuing the study of religion in later grades.

In anticipation of that eventuality, optional courses in Religion Studies at each grade level of the public secondary schools should be planned now through the development of curriculum guidelines by the Ministry of Education. When the curriculum guidelines for these courses have been produced, Regulation 269, Schedule A, should then be amended to include Religion Studies. This will allow students at the faculties of education to select Religion Studies as a subject option when selecting the intermediate or senior divisions for areas of specialization.

8.32 ***SECTION 235(1)(C) OF THE EDUCATION ACT, R.S.O. 1980, SHOULD BE REVISED TO READ AS FOLLOWS: "TO INCULCATE BY PRECEPT AND EXAMPLE RESPECT FOR RELIGION AND THOSE PRINCIPLES OF MORALITY UNDERLYING ALL MAJOR WORLD RELIGIONS AND THE HIGHEST REGARD FOR TRUTH, JUSTICE, LOYALTY, LOVE OF COUNTRY, HUMANITY, BENEVOLENCE, SOBRIETY, INDUSTRY, FRUGALITY, PURITY, TEMPERANCE AND ALL OTHER VIRTUES."***

Section 235(1)(c) of the Education Act currently states that it is one of the duties of teachers "to inculcate by precept and example respect for religion and the principles of Judaeo-Christian morality...".

Reference to the principles of Judaeo-Christian morality served a meaningful purpose at the time this particular section of the Education Act was added, and in the interval of years since that time. It identified a standard of behaviour for teachers that was, and continues to be, desirable in Ontario schools. It also appeared at a time when the composition of Ontario's society was somewhat different from what it is today.

In our society in Ontario today, reference to the principles of only one or two religions ignores the reality that ours is now a pluralistic society represented by several major world religions. It could also suggest that the moral principles of one or two religions are different from, or perhaps superior to, the moral principles of other major world religions.

The common threads that run through all the major world religions are the moral principles that can be found in each of them. The standard of moral behaviour identified for teachers should reflect those moral principles common to all the major cultures and religions represented by the students in the public school system.

8.33 ***SECTION 50(1) OF THE EDUCATION ACT, R.S.O. 1980, SHOULD BE REVOKED.***

This section of the Education Act currently states that "subject to the regulations, a pupil shall be allowed to receive such religious instruction as his parent or guardian desires, or where the pupil is an adult, as he desires."

In observing the guidebooks and courses of studies for religious education approved for use in Ontario public elementary schools after the introduction of legislation in 1944 requiring two periods of religious education per week, it becomes obvious that the intended purpose of religious education at that time was to nurture pupils in the Christian faith, through instruction.

It must be remembered, however, that the nature of Ontario's population in the 1940s and early 1950s was much different from today. Acceptance of such an intended purpose was less likely to be challenged, and even if challenged, was not likely to receive serious consideration.

This inquiry has previously defined religious education as "the acquisition of knowledge and awareness enabling individuals to understand, appreciate and respect different religious beliefs, attitudes and behaviours". This is part of the mandate of the public school system in fulfilling the goals of education identified for Ontario schools. The program of Religion Studies must not be perceived as a means of indoctrination, however. It should be regarded as similar in kind to other educational programs in the curriculum, and thereby subject to the parameters provided in ministry guidelines.

Religious instruction also has been defined earlier in this report as a "methodology designed to nurture and perpetuate a particular set of religious beliefs, attitudes and behaviours." Section 50(1) of the Education Act refers specifically to "instruction", and as such cannot be interpreted as referring to a program such as the proposed Religion Studies program, whose purpose of developing an understanding of and sensitivity to religious points of view is entirely and only educational in nature.

The public school system in Ontario has no mandate to instruct in any religious faith. It is not the function nor the obligation of the public school system to nurture any one religious faith. Instruction in a particular faith or the teaching of sectarian religion is the responsibility of those parents who wish to have religious instruction for their children, and also that of the various religious institutions.

The proposed Religion Studies program takes the place of religious instruction as outlined in the Act and Regulations. The program would be compulsory for all students, taught by teachers, and not restricted to being taught immediately after the opening or before the closing of school.

Boards should not be required to offer additional religious instruction programs when the proposed Religion Studies program is in place. This does not preclude a board, however, from choosing to provide religious instruction programs outside regular school hours.

8.34 ***REGULATION 262 SHOULD BE AMENDED TO REFLECT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THIS INQUIRY REGARDING THE DEFINITION OF RELIGION STUDIES, THE COMPULSORY NATURE OF THE PROGRAM, WHO SHALL TEACH THE PROGRAM, THE MULTIFAITH NATURE OF THE PROGRAM, THE TIME ALLOCATED FOR THE PROGRAM, AND THE EXEMPTION PROVISION FOR PUPILS.***

Regulation 262, Section 1, should be amended to include a definition of Religion Studies, as follows:

(h) "Religion Studies" means studies about religions to provide knowledge and awareness enabling individuals to understand, appreciate and respect various religious beliefs, attitudes and behaviours.

Regulation 262, Section 28, should be revoked in its entirety, and should be rewritten to include the following:

RELIGION STUDIES
IN PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

(1) Religion Studies shall be compulsory in the public elementary schools.

(2) Religion Studies shall be taught by certificated teachers.

(3) The Religion Studies program shall be a non-confessional and non-denominational program that is based on a multifaith approach.

(4) The equivalent of sixty minutes per week shall be devoted to Religion Studies during the course of a school term.

(5) Of the total time allocated to Religion Studies during each school term, a minimum of one-third of the time shall be allocated to Christianity, a minimum of one-third of the time shall be allocated to religions other than Christianity, and the emphasis of the remaining one-third of the total time shall be determined within each individual educational jurisdiction, through the Religion Studies Advisory Committee.

(6) No pupil shall be required to be subject to a Religion Studies program where the parent or guardian of the pupil, or the pupil where the pupil is an adult, applies to the principal of the school that the pupil attends for exemption therefrom.

(7) Each public board of education shall constitute a Religion Studies Advisory Committee.

(8) The Religion Studies Advisory Committee shall consist of four groups representing:

(a) lay persons from those religious groups which most appropriately reflect the major religions within Ontario;

(b) recognized clergy from those religious groups which most appropriately reflect the major religions within the board's jurisdiction;

(c) trustees and professional staff of the board of education, and

(d) the associations representing teachers whom the board of education determines should be represented.

(9) On any question or issue to be decided by the Religion Studies Advisory Committee, only the four representative groups on the committee shall be entitled to vote, and each of the four groups shall have a single vote.

(10) No recommendation or decision shall be forwarded to the board of education from the Religion Studies Advisory Committee unless it has been determined by a majority vote of the four representative groups which comprise the committee.

8.35 *BOARDS OF EDUCATION THAT MIGHT CHOOSE TO MAKE RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO SO OUTSIDE THE REGULAR SCHOOL PROGRAM.*

The provision of religious instruction and the nurturing of a particular faith are responsibilities of the home and the religious communities. Unfortunately, for many children this area of growth and development is entirely neglected.

While it is important to consider whether the provision of religious instruction should be made at all in the public school system, the argument has frequently been made that a similar practice currently exists in the separate school system.

The two situations are not entirely the same, however, because various religions are represented in the public school system, the system that is open to all. There is also a constitutional basis for the practice in the separate schools which does not apply to the public schools.

To have religious instruction at any time during the regular school day in the public schools would necessitate the segregation of students on the basis of religious or non-religious affiliation. This has been one of the controversial issues associated with religious education in the past. Segregation on the basis of religion in a public institution such as the public school system is not an acceptable practice because it undermines rather than contributes to unity in a pluralistic, democratic society. No subject offered in the public school system as part of the regular program should require segregation on the basis of culture or religion.

In educational jurisdictions where there might be majority support for religious instruction, a program might be considered on a voluntary basis for students whose parents are prepared to support the concept, on the condition that it be provided outside the regular school program and outside regular school hours. It could not be provided as a substitute for the Religion Studies program that would be part of the regular curriculum for all students.

Other than the possibility of costs involved in the use of facilities, boards of education should assume no costs associated with the program. It is not the responsibility of public boards of education to provide instructional programs in particular religious faiths. Any costs associated with the program would be the responsibility of the parents of the students involved.

The organization and presentation of the program would not be the responsibility of the school system. Clergy or designated lay persons would present the program, and parents would choose to have their children attend the religious group of their choice.

8.36 ***THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION SHOULD GIVE SERIOUS CONSIDERATION TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A SIMILAR RELIGION STUDIES PROGRAM IN OTHER PUBLICLY-FUNDED ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN ONTARIO.***

The task that faces all schools is that of preparing students for life. Regardless of the location, the system, or the school, the needs of the students are the same. They require an intellectual, spiritual and moral foundation that will prepare them for their roles as adults. This demands knowledge, understanding, and skills that will provide for the development of appropriate attitudes and patterns of behaviour.

All children today, regardless of the schools which they attend, will be absorbed as adults into the same larger society. They will need to be prepared adequately for that pluralistic society in order to co-exist in harmony and develop positive, supportive relationships with those with whom they come in contact.

The importance of the spiritual dimension of the educational development of students, and a rationale to support a program that emphasizes learning about religions, have been presented in other sections of this report. It seems very appropriate to conclude that if the program is essential for one group of children in elementary schools, it should serve the same purpose for all others in elementary schools as well.

8.37 ***THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM SHOULD CRITICALLY EXAMINE PRACTICES WITHIN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO ENSURE THAT THEY ARE CONSISTENT WITH THE PHILOSOPHY ON WHICH THE PUBLIC EDUCATION SYSTEM IS BASED AND WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE PLURALISTIC SOCIETY WHICH IT SERVES.***

During the inquiry process, comments were made on numerous occasions to suggest evidence of a hidden curriculum that is becoming more and more prevalent in the public schools. Examples of practices representing a hidden curriculum included the teaching of secular humanism, attempts to influence the thinking of students to comply with the personal philosophy of a teacher, lack of appropriate moral standards and insensitivity to minority groups.

This inquiry has no further information other than that provided during the inquiry process and therefore is not in a position to form any definite conclusions on the validity of the concerns expressed. The perception, however, whether valid or otherwise, should be a cause for concern, because for those who share these perceptions, the issue is real. For that reason, there is a need for the public school system to critically examine practices within its schools to ensure that no valid basis for these perceptions exists.

Parents have the right and also the freedom to expose their children to the religious faith of their choice, and to provide them with experiences that will nurture that particular faith and help it to become the religious direction for their lives. This is the confessional dimension of religion, and while being an important aspect of religious growth and development, it is the responsibility of the home and the religious community, not that of the school.

The school, the personnel with whom the child interacts when in school, and the school environment itself, should reflect the values that are common to the major world religions, all of which are represented in Ontario public elementary schools.

Parents have the right to expect this complementary support from the educational system, but should not consider the educational system to be the primary agent in assuming this responsibility.

Teachers are role models for children. So are parents, religious leaders, community leaders, political leaders, sports celebrities, high profile media personnel and others. All adults share this responsibility and no one group outside the home should be singled out as being more responsible than others in this important process. Teachers, however, must accept the significance of their roles as extremely vital and important in the guidance of children. It is expected of them, as teachers in a public system accessible and open to all, that they will inculcate by precept and example, respect for religion and those principles of morality underlying all the major world religions.

The public school cannot be a forum for those who wish to introduce a personal philosophy of their own into society, or for those who wish to undermine the traditional and accepted morals of our society.

8.38 ***THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION SHOULD DESIGN STRATEGIES TO COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY WITH PARENTS, EDUCATORS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC ABOUT DECISIONS REGARDING THE RELIGION STUDIES PROGRAM.***

When the new Religion Studies program is announced, the Ministry of Education should have in place strategies to quickly and effectively inform the public about the intent of the program and what will take place in the classrooms as a result of the program. Religion is a very sensitive topic and unless a detailed explanation accompanies the initiative, many people will oppose the concept.

The inquiry has found that many of the concerns about religious education originate from a lack of understanding. For example, during the course of the inquiry there was considerable evidence of confusion between the terms religious exercises and religious education.

Some people, including educators, members of the clergy, news media people, and members of the general public assumed that religious education meant religious exercises, which was then equated to the Lord's Prayer issue. For these people, the Inquiry on Religious Education was an inquiry on the Lord's Prayer. This resulted in telephone calls, letters and presentations to the inquiry concerning the Lord's Prayer.

It became very obvious in many of these expressions of concern that there is a lack of understanding of the reasons behind the new regulations pertaining to opening or closing exercises, announced by the Minister of Education in January, 1989. Many people appear to believe that it is part of the government's attempt to remove Christianity from the public school system. The real reason does not appear to have been understood.

Another source of confusion, although understandable, was the difference between the terms religious education and religious instruction. For the inquiry and for many religious experts, religious education means education about religion, and religious instruction means the teaching of the tenets of a particular faith.

For many people, however, the terms religious education and religious instruction both mean religious instruction. In fact many of those who claimed to be opposed to religious education were not. After some discussion about the terms, they agreed that they were opposed to religious instruction but very supportive of religious education.

Another fear expressed by many came as a result of one of the terms of reference for the inquiry. It stated "identify curriculum options and an appropriate religious education policy for the public elementary schools which responds to the multicultural and multifaith nature of the province".

To some, this meant that there was an intent to have very little, if any content about Christianity included in an elementary school religious education program. These people argued that since the population of Ontario is mainly Christian, and Ontario and Canada were founded on Judaeo-Christian principles, and since it is these principles that hold our country together, children must learn about Christianity. Christianity is also part of our history and should be included in the school curriculum.

Other arguments stated that people immigrate to this country because it is Christian and has Christian standards that serve as the basis for how we govern ourselves and how we function as a society from day to day. The concern is that the introduction of a multifaith Religion Studies program will not give Christianity the prominence it deserves and our Christian heritage will soon be lost.

The inquiry has responded to these concerns and Christianity does have a position of importance in the proposed Religion Studies program. This fact must be communicated very clearly to the public.

In order for the Religion Studies program to be implemented effectively in the elementary schools, the program must have public interest, understanding and support. To achieve this, the Ministry of Education must communicate with parents, teachers, and the general public, outlining very clearly the rationale, purpose, and nature of the program. One effective strategy for doing this would be the publication of a brochure written in a Question and Answer format. This method is being used in the United States to promote religion in the public school system and by the Ecumenical Study Commission in Ontario. A brochure of this type could be sent to every parent of an elementary school student and to all interested organizations for distribution to their membership.

Another method would be the production of videotapes outlining the nature of the program. Different videotapes for educators and non-educators should be made since the concerns of each group are different. These tapes could be shown at public meetings, on school parents' nights, in the churches, and at school staff meetings. Hopefully the tapes would avoid any misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the legislation and, if done well, the tapes would alleviate many concerns.

The recommendations of this inquiry also allow for public involvement in Religion Studies programs, through the Religion Studies Advisory Committee. This fact must be publicized. Ownership in the program will bring support for the program.

Other possible methods of communication are newspaper advertisements and videotapes for broadcast purposes.

A program in Religion Studies has enormous potential as part of the curriculum in the elementary schools. However, because of the sensitive nature of the subject, the program will be confronted with many hurdles if the nature of the program, the rationale and the objectives are not communicated effectively and quickly.

Section 9.0

CONCLUDING SUMMARY

Religious education in the public elementary schools is a complex issue that generates strong emotions and often leads to heated discussions and controversy. The experiences of this inquiry provided evidence of that. Because religious education frequently becomes an emotional issue, it is important to search out and focus on factors other than emotions in order to establish a rational and logical basis for making decisions.

There are three basic areas of concentration that have served as guides in providing a consistent direction and focus during the deliberations of this inquiry. The most basic of these was the identification of the needs of children, especially those needs to be addressed in effectively preparing children for their roles as adults in tomorrow's society. A second basic issue was the nature of the society in which our children will find themselves as they assume their adult roles in future years. With these important issues as guides, a third significant issue guiding this inquiry then became that of determining the potential role or significance, if any, of some form of religious education in meeting the preparation needs of children for their adult roles in society. A consistent focus on these three critical factors should be evident throughout the text of this report.

The public school system must continue to have academic goals, but it must also strive to achieve other important and necessary goals as well. As stated by Bastian, "The development of desirable attitudes and values is extremely important. Canada is a society with a rich variety of ethnic groups, cultures, languages and religions. It is vital that students develop a sense of tolerance, respect, understanding and appreciation of cultures, beliefs, and values different from their own." [102] Other equally important goals involve helping students to develop positive feelings about themselves, as well as positive feelings about others. A high self-esteem is the key to acceptance of others. It is important to develop respect for the dignity, value, and worth of all individuals.

The challenge becomes even greater by the need to present a representative Canadian viewpoint, yet at the same time recognize and respect within that view the unique cultures and traditions that exist and need to be maintained. This challenge has become significant by the changes of the last few decades, and will increase even more in the future.

The nature of society in Ontario and Canada today has been identified in the statistics and information presented in earlier sections of this report. It must be obvious to every adult in Ontario that the cultural makeup of our society has changed during the last half of this century, and that these changes will become even more pronounced in the future. We live in a multicultural society represented by many cultures with different traditions, customs, and religious beliefs.

It is not only important that the public education system in Ontario recognizes the pluralistic nature of today's society, but also that the recognition be manifested in such a meaningful way as to result in the development of respect for and acceptance of that pluralism. This will help people to live, work, and share together in unity and harmony, not just in a community, or a country, but in the world at large. The education system is the most effective vehicle for addressing these issues and building bridges of understanding through knowledge.

Various arguments supporting the need for education about religion have been provided in previous sections of this report. Those arguments have emphasized that education without religion is incomplete and deficient. It also has been stated frequently that without religion, it is not possible to fully understand life or to appreciate many of the experiences in life, such as those involving art, music, or literature. We live in a world that is complex and challenging. Young people, as well as adults, are faced with difficult questions and difficult situations.

Responding to these questions and situations in life demands the best preparation possible. Education about religions has the potential to make a significant contribution to that preparation by developing an understanding of the world in which we live, the beliefs of individuals around us and in other areas of the world, the importance of religion in the lives of people, and the importance of religion in shaping the moral and political views of society. With increased awareness and understanding, greater respect for the customs, traditions and beliefs of other people will result.

What we do as individuals is determined by what we believe. To understand and appreciate the actions of other people, it is important to develop an awareness and understanding of what they believe and why they believe what they do. An appropriate Religion Studies program should be designed to develop that increased awareness and understanding. Each child must be assisted in the development of an appreciation of his or her own roots, and also an awareness and understanding of the customs and traditions of others.

Without an effective program that focuses on various aspects of religion, students will not have adequate opportunities to develop an understanding of their own heritage and the traditions and religious experiences of others.

The majority of the letters and briefs received by this inquiry indicated support for having some form of religious education in the public elementary schools. Caution regarding the nature of the program was expressed by many. Some identified barriers that appear almost insurmountable in having a successful program.

However, experiences in other educational jurisdictions have demonstrated that the issues generating concerns and the barriers to success are resolvable. Discrimination caused by the need for exemption and the indoctrination nature of programs have been the most significant issues in the past. These are real issues and must be carefully addressed in considering a new program in Religion Studies. They can be overcome and the potential benefits for students of learning about religion can be realized.

It is important to remember that the entire responsibility does not rest just with the public schools. Society in general, and those of us who live in Ontario, must share that responsibility. In fact, Piediscalzi cautions that we should not

> ...expect too much of our public schools in the area of fully preparing our children for the rapidly changing society in which they find themselves....We tend to project our problems onto our young people and ask the educators to solve them for us.
>
> At present, well-meaning religious people are asking the schools to engender religious commitment in our youth so that they can correct the social problems which trouble us. This is surrendering a responsibility which properly belongs to the home and to the religious community.
>
> Any genuine religious reformation must come out of the family and from religious institutions rather than from the public schools. All that the public schools can do is to develop a broadly empathetic study of the religions of mankind and an understanding of how religion operates in human life.
>
> Out of this will come a new sense of tolerance and appreciation for people. It is not a panacea. The reformation belongs to the churches and not to the public schools. [103]

Recognition must be given to the thousands of dedicated and talented educators whose efforts provide Ontario with a solid public education system envied by many outside our province. Credit also must be given to the parents, trustees and communities for the support they provide in different ways to ensure that children receive the best possible education through the public system.

The Provincial Government is also an important partner in this enterprise. Through its financial support and the direction and leadership provided through the Ministry of Education, the public system continues to be a system that is free and open to all, just as it was designed originally by the great educational architect, Egerton Ryerson.

One of the additional strengths of Ontario's public education system has been the genuine willingness to examine challenges and problems identified as areas of need from time to time. This reflects the constant search for ways to improve the system, and the desire to keep pace with changing conditions and circumstances.

Many individuals have commented during the inquiry process that we must "preserve our heritage". That is surely a statement to which all residents of Ontario would subscribe. Agreeing on what our heritage includes might not generate the same degree of support, however. Those who first settled here learned how to live together regardless of circumstances or differences. They developed a system based on values conducive to the common good to ensure the kind of society that they wanted.

Individuals of all religious beliefs have been attracted to this society. The richest heritage that we have been given is the independent spirit demonstrated by the founders of our nation, the dignity which was reflected in their acceptance of differences, and the resiliency and adaptability so essential in dealing with change and difficult situations. One of the best ways in which we might preserve this heritage is to demonstrate a similar spirit and to reflect those same qualities by increasing our understanding of others who have chosen to come to this privileged country and make it their home. Like all others in the past, these people will enrich our society, and will contribute in positive ways to the preservation of the values and qualities that have not only been characteristic of this province, but also have been instrumental in the development of the society and way of life that exist in Ontario today.

The issue addressed by this inquiry is indeed a very important one. Many people are concerned about this critical matter, and the concern and interest generated reflect the spirit that has prevailed throughout Ontario's history. We must indeed preserve an important aspect of our heritage, which is the desire and need to nurture the spiritual dimension of human growth and development.

In conclusion, this inquiry emphasizes the urgency of some form of action on this matter. This is an extremely critical time in the history of this issue. There has been more than sufficient time for the implementation of the existing regulation to recognize its weaknesses. There has been sufficient study of the issues through government commissions, and the research of individuals and organizations. The current status of the subject in the schools is clear. The issues have been identified, and the alternatives have been discussed at considerable length. The concerns of many individuals, groups and organizations have been made known. It is now time for decisions to be made regarding the status of religious education in the public elementary schools.

To do nothing and allow the current situation to continue in the public elementary schools is not an acceptable alternative. The public is expecting some definite decision, and there is a need for a resolution of the uncertainty that has prevailed far too long.

There are two alternatives from which to choose. One is to rescind the existing regulation regarding religious education and remove it completely from the curriculum. This inquiry has gathered no substantial information to support such action, and strongly recommends against such a decision. The other alternative is to address the issue with the intent of implementing an appropriate program of education about religions that will enhance the educational development of children and prepare them for their adult lives in a pluralistic society. This particular alternative is enthusiastically supported by the recommendations in this report of the inquiry.

A comprehensive program in Religion Studies should be provided in all the public elementary schools in Ontario. This challenge must be undertaken with enthusiasm, but also with some caution. The program has the potential to be a positive force in shaping the future of Ontario and our society.

To achieve this goal will require sincere commitment, careful planning, effective communications, and dedicated individuals. All these criteria for success exist in the public system, and the goal can be achieved.

Section 10.0

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Education about religion should be compulsory in the curriculum of public elementary schools in Ontario.

2. The subject title "Religious Education" should be discontinued and replaced by the more appropriate designation of "Religion Studies".

3. Religion Studies should be defined as "studies about religions to provide knowledge and awareness enabling individuals to understand, appreciate and respect various religious beliefs, attitudes and behaviours".

4. Religion Studies shall be a non-confessional and non-denominational program about religions.

5. The Religion Studies program implemented in the public elementary schools should be based on a multifaith approach.

6. The nature and content of a Religion Studies program must be consistent with designated aims and guiding principles.

7. The equivalent of sixty minutes per week should be devoted to Religion Studies during the course of a school term.

8. Of the total time allocated to Religion Studies during each school term, a minimum of one-third of the time shall be based on Christianity, a minimum of one-third of the time shall be based on other religions, and the emphasis for the remaining one-third of the total time shall be determined within each individual educational jurisdiction.

9. A policy statement for Religion Studies, grades 1 - 8, should be developed by the Ministry of Education.

10. The Ministry of Education should establish a task force to provide support and assistance in the development of a policy statement document for Religion Studies in the public elementary schools.

11. A series of pilot projects in Religion Studies should be initiated for September, 1991.

12. Full implementation of a Religion Studies program in all public elementary schools in Ontario should be in place not later than the 1993-1994 school year.

13. Appropriate methods of implementing the Religion Studies program in the primary and junior divisions should be considered during the pilot project process.

14. The study of Christianity in the Religion Studies program should reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief without being distinctive of any particular Christian denomination.

15. No pupil should be required to be subject to a Religion Studies program where the parent/guardian of the pupil applies to the principal of the school which the pupil attends, for exemption therefrom.

16. Religion Studies programs should be taught by certificated teachers.

17. The Ministry of Education should amend Regulation 269, Schedule E, to include Religion Studies, and faculties of education should be encouraged to make available a three-session additional qualification course for Religion Studies (grades 1 - 8).

18. Faculties of education should be encouraged to make Religion Studies a required component of the foundation courses for primary, junior, intermediate (7, 8) division pre-service teacher qualifications.

19. The Ministry of Education should provide direction and funding to support in-service opportunities in Religion Studies for teachers.

20. Boards of education should be encouraged to appoint teachers with either specialist or honours specialist qualifications in Religion Studies as sources of expertise in the elementary program.

21. The Ministry of Education should provide for resource personnel with expertise in Religion Studies in each ministry regional office.

22. Each public board of education should establish a Religion Studies Advisory Committee.

23. The Religion Studies Advisory Committee should consist of four representative groups.

24. On any question or issue to be decided by the Religion Studies Advisory Committee, only the four representative groups on the committee shall be entitled to vote, and each of the four groups shall have a single vote.

25. No recommendation or decision shall be forwarded to the board of education from the Religion Studies Advisory Committee unless it has been determined by a majority vote of the four representative groups which comprise the committee.

26. Co-operation among school boards should be encouraged in the area of Religion Studies.

27. To recognize the additional costs involved in implementing the Religion Studies program, the Ministry of Education should provide additional funding to assist school boards.

28. An effective monitoring process should be initiated by the Ministry of Education to ensure that the regulations regarding Religion Studies are appropriately implemented in all public elementary schools in Ontario.

29. The Ministry of Education should initiate and encourage the development of student learning materials in both print and non-print formats to support the requirements of the Religion Studies program.

30. The trustees of each board of education, the supervisory officers and the principal of each respective school are collectively responsible for ensuring that the regulations, policy statement and programs pertaining to Religion Studies are implemented appropriately.

31. The Ministry of Education should make provisions immediately for additional credit courses in Religion Studies at the secondary school level.

32. Section 235(1)(c) of the Education Act, R.S.O. 1980, should be revised to read as follows:

"To inculcate by precept and example respect for religion and those principles of morality underlying all major world religions and the highest regard for truth, justice, loyalty, love of country, humanity, benevolence, sobriety, industry, frugality, purity, temperance and all other virtues."

33. Section 50(1) of the Education Act, R.S.O. 1980, should be revoked.

34. Regulation 262 should be amended to reflect the recommendations of this inquiry regarding the definition of Religion Studies, the compulsory nature of the program, who shall teach the program, the multifaith nature of the program, the time allocated for the program, and the exemption provision for pupils.

35. Boards of education that might choose to make religious instruction available to students should be able to do so outside the regular school program.

36. The Ministry of Education should give serious consideration to the implementation of a similar Religion Studies program in other publicly-funded elementary schools in Ontario.

37. The public school system should critically examine practices within the public schools to ensure that they are consistent with the philosophy on which the public education system is based and with the principles of the pluralistic society which it serves.

38. The Ministry of Education should design strategies to communicate effectively with parents, educators, and the general public about decisions regarding the Religion Studies program.

Section 11.0

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Section 13.0

APPENDICES

Appendix A - Order in Council

B - Revised Regulation 262, Section 28

C - Letter and survey questionnaire to public boards of education

D - Letter to religious organizations, teacher associations, home and school organizations, and public school trustee organizations

E - Advertisement: Request for Written Briefs - February 17, 1989 (List of newspapers carrying advertisement)

F - Advertisement: Notice of Public Meetings - May 26, 1989 (List of newspapers carrying advertisement)

G - Revised schedule of public meetings

H - Report of submissions to the inquiry

I - Goals of Education

APPENDIX A

ORDER IN COUNCIL

On the recommendation of the undersigned, the Lieutenant Governor, by and with the advice and concurrence of the Executive Council, orders that

WHEREAS the Minister of Education has appointed Dr. Glenn Watson as a commission, pursuant to section 9 of the Education Act, R.S.O. 1980, Chapter 129 as amended, upon the following terms,

To:

* review the existing policy with respect to religious education;

* identify curriculum options for an appropriate religious education policy for the public elementary schools which responds to the multicultural and multifaith nature of the population of the province;

* identify appropriate teacher preparation strategies to support the proposed curriculum options;

* examine religious education policies of other Canadian provinces;

* examine the 1969 Report of the Committee on Religious Education in the Public Schools of Ontario and reports of other similarly-mandated inquiries from other Canadian provinces;

* conduct extensive consultation with interested parties;

* make recommendations to the Minister of Education with regard to the adoption of a religious education program policy.

The one-person ministerial inquiry shall make its report and recommendations to the minister on or before January 31, 1990.

Therefore, the appointment of Dr. Glenn Watson to act as a commission from the 12th day of January, 1989 to the 31st day of January, 1990, is approved and confirmed.

Approved and Ordered by the Lieutenant Governor in Council on February 9, 1989.

O.C. 427/89

APPENDIX B

REGULATION 262

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Section 28

(1) Revoked

(2) Revoked

(3) Revoked

(4) Two periods per week of one-half hour each, in each public school, shall be devoted to religious education.

(5) Religious education shall be given immediately after the opening of a public school or immediately before the closing of school in either the morning or the afternoon session.

(6) Instruction in religious education shall be given by the teacher and issues of controversial or sectarian nature shall be avoided.

(7) By resolution of a board, a clergyman or clergymen of any denomination, or a lay person or lay persons selected by the clergyman or clergymen, may give religious instruction in a school of the board in lieu of a teacher or teachers.

(8) Where two or more clergymen of different denominations, or lay persons selected by the clergymen, upon written application to the board, secure permission under subsection (7) to give religious instruction in the same school, the principal of the school, by resolution of the board, shall arrange for such accommodation within the school and such times within the periods referred to in subsection (5) as are agreeable to both the principal and the clergymen or the lay persons selected by the clergymen.

(9) Where the number of rooms in a public school is insufficient to meet the needs of the groups organized for religious education under subsection (7) or (8), the principal of the school, by resolution of the board, may arrange for additional accommodation elsewhere.

(10) No pupil shall be required to take part or be subject to any instruction in religious education where a parent of the pupil, or the pupil where the pupil is an adult, applies to the principal of the school that the pupil attends for exemption therefrom.

(11) In public schools without suitable waiting rooms or other similar accommodation, if the parent of a pupil or, where the pupil is an adult, the pupil applies to the principal of the school for the exemption of the pupil from attendance while religious education is being given, such request shall be granted.

(12) Where a parent of a pupil, or the pupil where the pupil is an adult, objects to the pupil's taking part in religious exercises or being subject to instruction in religious education, but requests that the pupil remain in the classroom during the time devoted to instruction in religious education, the principal of the school that the pupil attends shall permit the pupil to do so, if the pupil maintains decorous behaviour.

(13) If, because of the right to be absent from instruction in religious education, any pupil is not present in the classroom during the periods specified for instruction in religious education, the absence shall not be considered a contravention of the rules of the school.

(14) A teacher claiming exemption from the teaching of religious education as prescribed by this section shall notify the board to that effect in writing, and the board shall make such other provision as is necessary to implement this section with respect to the teaching of religious education.

(15) The Minister may grant to a board exemption from the teaching of religious education in any classroom or school if the board requests in writing the exemption and submits reasons for its request.

(16) The appropriate supervisory officer shall each year bring the provisions of this section to the attention of the board or boards in respect of which such officer has jurisdiction.

Ontario

APPENDIX C

Ministerial
Inquiry on
Religious
Education

Enquête
ministérielle sur
l'enseignement
religieux

11th floor
1200 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario
M5R 2A5
(416) 963-3356

11 étage
1200, rue Bay
Toronto (Ontario)
M5R 2A5
(416) 963-3356

MEMORANDUM TO: Directors of Education, Boards of Education
Chairpersons, Boards of Education

FROM: Glenn A. Watson

DATE: February 3, 1989

SUBJECT: Ministerial Inquiry on Religious Education in Ontario Public Elementary Schools

As you may already know, the Honourable Chris Ward, Minister of Education, has established a Ministerial Inquiry on Religious Education in the public elementary schools of Ontario. I am pleased to have been selected to chair this inquiry.

In announcing this inquiry, Mr. Ward stated, "This government believes there is an important role for religious education in the public elementary schools. While this view is shared by many religious groups, parents and educators, opinions differ on what should be contained in an appropriate policy on religious education".

One of the terms of reference in my mandate from the Minister of Education states that extensive consultation will be conducted with interested parties during this inquiry, and it is my intent to solicit this input through the most effective processes which the time period will allow. After a series of consultations with interested groups and individuals in Ontario, and with the benefit of briefs which will be submitted along with the research which will be done, a report for the Minister will be prepared to address the terms of reference identified for this inquiry. The expected date for the delivery of that report, with recommendations, is January 31, 1990.

The terms of reference include the following:

1.0 a review of the existing policy with respect to religious education;

2.0 the identification of curriculum options for an appropriate religious education policy for the public elementary schools which responds to the multicultural and multifaith nature of the population of the province;

3.0 the identification of appropriate teacher preparation strategies to support the proposed curriculum options, and

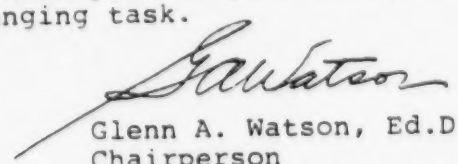
4.0 the making of recommendations to the Minister of Education with regard to the adoption of a religious education program policy.

On or before May 15, 1989, I would be pleased to receive a written submission from your board of education and from any individual, or group of individuals, within your system. As a suggested format for the brief, please address the first three terms of reference as outlined in the preceding paragraph. Your input will be appreciated and it will be considered along with the other information received during this inquiry.

The mandate for this inquiry does not include the issue of opening or closing exercises in public schools, or the Lord's Prayer. These matters were addressed in the new policy for opening exercises announced by the Minister on January 12, 1989, (Policy Memo. No. 108).

In addition, I am respectfully requesting each public system to complete the enclosed questionnaire on religious education in its elementary schools, in order to gather information for statistical and comparative purposes regarding the current situation in the province. It is not my intent to create additional work for you, but this information is very necessary.

Thank you for your co-operation and support in this challenging task.



Glenn A. Watson, Ed.D.
Chairperson
Ministerial Inquiry on Religious Education
in Ontario Public Elementary Schools

Enclosure

QUESTIONNAIRE

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN THE PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

(Reference - Reg. 262, section 28)

Note - If your board also operates elementary French language schools for which there is a different religious education policy, please complete and identify a separate questionnaire for those schools.

Name of Board _____

No. of Elementary Schools _____

No. of Elementary Students _____

No. of Elementary Teachers _____

Contact person re Religious Education Practices _____

Telephone No. _____

1.0 Time devoted to Religious Education in the Elementary Schools of this system:

Two 1/2-hour periods per week..... _____

Less than two 1/2-hour periods per week..... _____

No regularly scheduled classes..... _____

Other (please explain) _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2.0 Religious Education is scheduled immediately after the opening or immediately before the closing of school in either the morning or afternoon session:

Yes___ No__

If "No", please explain: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3.0 Instruction in Religious Education in the Elementary Schools of this system is provided by:

Teachers.....Yes__ No__

Clergy.....Yes___ No__

Lay persons.....Yes___ No__

Other (please explain):_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

4.0 What program has been used for Religious Education instruction?_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

5.0 What materials have been used to support the Religious Education program?_____

_____

_____

_____

6.0 Number of elementary teachers who have submitted written requests claiming exemption from the teaching of Religious Education.....____

7.0 Number of students who have been exempted from Religious Education instruction by parental request ____

8.0 Has your board formally applied to the Minister of Education for exemption under subsection (15) of section 28 of Regulation 262?.....Yes___ No__

If yes, for what school years?_____

_____

What reasons were submitted to support the request for exemption?_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

9.0 What are the priority needs which should be addressed to assist your system in implementing the regulations pertaining to Religious Education in the elementary schools?_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

10.0 Please add any further comments, suggestions or recommendations relevant to this inquiry_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for your assistance. Please return, by April 14, 1989, to:

Dr. G. A. Watson
Chairperson
Ministerial Inquiry on Religious Education
1200 Bay Street
11th floor
Toronto, Ontario
M5R 2A5

Ontario

APPENDIX D

Ministerial
Inquiry on
Religious
Education

Enquête
ministérielle sur
l'enseignement
religieux

11th floor
1200 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario
M5R 2A5
(416) 963-3356

11 étage
1200, rue Bay
Toronto (Ontario)
M5R 2A5
(416) 963-3356

February 13, 1989

Dear

As you may already know, the Honourable Chris Ward, Minister of Education, has established a one-person Ministerial Inquiry into Religious Education in the Public Elementary Schools of Ontario. I am pleased to have been selected to chair this inquiry.

In his comments, Mr. Ward stated, "This government believes there is an important role for religious education in the public elementary schools. While this view is shared by many religious groups, parents and educators, opinions differ on what should be contained in an appropriate policy on religious education".

One of the terms of reference in my mandate from the Minister of Education states that extensive consultation will be conducted with interested parties during this inquiry and it is my intent to solicit this important input through the most effective processes which the time period will allow. After a series of consultations with interested groups and individuals in Ontario, and with the benefit of briefs which will be submitted along with the research which will be done, a report for the Minister will be prepared to address the terms of reference identified for the inquiry. The expected date for the delivery of that report is January 31, 1990.

The terms of reference include the following:

1.0 a review of the existing policy with respect to religious education;

2.0 the identification of curriculum options for an appropriate religious education policy for the public elementary schools which responds to the multicultural and multifaith nature of the population of the province;

3.0 the identification of appropriate teacher preparation strategies to support the proposed curriculum options, and

4.0 the making of recommendations to the Minister of Education with regard to the adoption of a religious education program policy.

On or before May 15, 1989, I would be pleased to receive a submission from you and/or your organization. As a suggested format for your brief, please address the first three terms of reference, as outlined in the preceding paragraph. Your input will be appreciated, and it will be considered along with the other information received during this inquiry.

The mandate for this inquiry does not include the issue of opening exercises or the Lord's Prayer. These matters were addressed in the new policy for opening exercises announced by the Minister on January 12, 1989.

Thank you for your assistance and support in this challenging task.

Yours truly,

Glenn A. Watson, Ed.D.
Chairperson
Ministerial Inquiry on Religious Education
in Ontario Public Elementary Schools

APPENDIX E

Request for Written Briefs

On January 12, 1989, Education Minister Chris Ward announced the appointment of a Ministerial Inquiry on Religious Education in Ontario Public Elementary Schools. The inquiry is to report and make recommendations to the Minister of Education by January 31, 1990, regarding the adoption of an appropriate religious education policy for the public elementary schools of Ontario. The mandate for this inquiry does not include the matter of opening or closing exercises in public schools.

The terms of reference for this inquiry include the following:

- a review of the existing policy with respect to religious education;
- the identification of curriculum options for an appropriate religious education policy for the public elementary schools, which responds to the multicultural and multifaith nature of the population of Ontario;
- the identification of appropriate teacher preparation strategies to support the teaching of religious education.

Interested individuals, organizations or groups who wish to provide input related to any of these terms of reference are invited to submit written briefs by May 15, 1989.

Inquiries and submissions should be forwarded to:

Dr. G.A. Watson
Chairperson
Ministerial Inquiry on Religious Education
in Ontario Public Elementary Schools
11th floor, 1200 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario
M5R 2A5

Ontario
Ministerial
Inquiry on
Religious Education

LIST OF DAILY NEWSPAPERS CARRYING ADVERTISEMENT
FEBRUARY 17, 1989

Barrie Examiner
Belleville Intelligencer
Brampton Daily Times
Brantford Expositor
Brockville Recorder and Times
Cambridge Daily Reporter
Chatham Daily News
Cobourg Daily Star
Cornwall Standard-Freeholder
Fort Frances Daily Bulletin
Guelph Mercury
Hamilton Spectator
Hearst Le Nord
Kenora Miner and News
Kingston Whig Standard
Kirkland Lake Northern Daily News
Kitchener-Waterloo Record
L'Express D'Orleans
Lindsay Daily Post
London Free Press
Niagara Falls Review
North Bay Nugget
Orillia Packet & Times
Oshawa Times
Ottawa Citizen
Ottawa Le Droit
Ottawa Sun
Owen Sound Sun Times
Pembroke Observer
Penetanguishene Le Gout De Vivre
Peterborough Examiner
Port Hope Guide
St. Catharines Standard
St. Thomas Times Journal
Sarnia Observer
Sault Ste Marie Star
Simcoe Reformer
Stratford Beacon-Herald
Sturgeon Falls Tribune
Sudbury Le Nouvel-Ontarien
Sudbury Star
Thunder Bay Times-News/Chronicle-Journal
Timmins Press
Toronto Globe & Mail
Toronto L'Express
Toronto Star
Toronto Sun
Welland/Port Colborne Tribune
Windsor Star
Woodstock Daily Sentinel Review

APPENDIX F

Ontario

Public Meetings

Ministerial Inquiry on Religious Education

On January 12, 1989, Education Minister Chris Ward announced the appointment of a Ministerial Inquiry on Religious Education in Ontario Public Elementary Schools. The terms of reference for this inquiry include the following:

- a review of the existing policy with respect to religious education;
- the identification of curriculum options for an appropriate religious education policy for the public elementary schools, which responds to the multicultural and multifaith nature of the population of Ontario;
- the identification of appropriate teacher preparation strategies to support the teaching of religious education.

A series of public meetings will be held across the province to provide opportunities for individuals or groups to express their suggestions and ideas related to the topic in general, and the terms of reference in particular. The meeting schedule is as follows:

Windsor	September 6
Sarnia	September 7
London	September 8
Dryden	September 12
Thunder Bay	September 13–14
Sudbury	September 19–20
Sault Ste. Marie	September 21
Timmins	September 26
North Bay	September 27–28
St. Catharines	October 3
Kitchener	October 4
Cobourg	October 5
Ottawa	October 11–12
Brockville	October 13
Orillia	October 17
Toronto	October 18–19
Mississauga	October 20

Those wishing to make presentations are required to contact the Office of the Ministerial Inquiry on Religious Education at (416) 963-3356, at least three weeks prior to the meeting date. Information on the location of each meeting, the procedure for the presentation and a specific time for each presentation will be provided.

If further clarification is necessary, inquiries should be directed to:

Dr. G.A. Watson
Chairperson
Ministerial Inquiry on Religious Education in Ontario
Public Elementary Schools
11th floor, 1200 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario M5R 2A5

Telephone (416) 963-3356

On peut aussi obtenir des renseignements en français sur l'Enquête ministérielle sur l'enseignement religieux dans les écoles publiques élémentaires de l'Ontario en écrivant au Bureau de renseignements, au 1200, rue Bay, 11e étage, Toronto (Ontario), M5R 2A5.

LIST OF NEWSPAPERS CARRYING ADVERTISEMENT
MAY 26, 1989

Barrie Examiner
Belleville Intelligencer
Brampton Daily Times
Brantford Expositor
Brockville Recorder and Times
Cambridge Daily Reporter
Chatham Daily News
Cobourg Daily Star
Cornwall Le Journal
Cornwall Standard-Freeholder
Dryden Observer
Fort Frances Daily Bulletin
Guelph Mercury
Hamilton Spectator
Hawkesbury Le Carillon
Hawkesbury Express/Le Moniteur-The Echo
Hearst Le Nord
Iroquois Falls La Boite A Nouvelle
Kenora Miner and News
Kingston Whig Standard
Kirkland Lake Northern Daily News
L'Edition De Prescott-Russell
L'Express D'Orleans
Le Journal Reflet, Embrun
Le Nord de Kapuskasing
London Free Press
Mississauga Horizon-Sud
Niagara Falls Review
North Bay Nugget
Orillia Packet & Times
Oshawa Times
Ottawa Citizen
Ottawa-Hull Le Droit
Ottawa Sun
Owen Sound Sun Times
Pembroke Observer
Penetanguishene Le Gout De Vivre
Peterborough Examiner
Port Hope Guide
St. Catharines Standard
St. Thomas Times Journal
Sarnia Observer
Sault Ste. Marie Star
Simcoe Reformer
Stratford Beacon-Herald
Sturgeon Falls Tribune
Sudbury Le Nouvel-Ontarien
Sudbury Le Voyageur
Sudbury Star

Thunder Bay Times-News/Chronicle-Journal
Timmins Press
Toronto Globe & Mail
Toronto L'Express
Toronto Star
Toronto Sun
Vanier Le Journal
Welland/Port Colborne Tribune
Windsor L'Rempart
Windsor Star
Woodstock Daily Sentinel Review

APPENDIX G

Revised Schedule

Locations and Dates of Public Meetings

Windsor	September 6
Sarnia	September 7
London	September 8
Dryden	September 12
Thunder Bay	September 13
Sudbury	September 19
Sault Ste. Marie	September 21
Timmins	September 26
North Bay	September 27
Woodstock	September 29
St. Catharines	October 3
Kitchener	October 4
Cobourg	October 5
Ottawa	October 11
Brockville	October 13
Orillia	October 17
Toronto	October 18, 19, 23
Mississauga	October 20, 27

APPENDIX H

REPORT OF SUBMISSIONS FROM CORPORATE AND PERSONAL AUTHORS TO THE MINISTERIAL INQUIRY ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION--ARRANGED BY BRIEF NUMBER

Briefs may be accessed through Onteris

RE0001 Carthew, A.M.H.
Toronto

RE0002 Fundamental Research
Institute (Reg'd)
Ottawa

RE0003 Szabo, John
Grimsby

RE0004 New Apostolic Church
Waterloo

RE0005 Hume, Karen
Woodstock

RE0006 Hum, Joyce
Orleans

RE0007 Smith, Peter R.
Sarnia

RE0008 Edwards, Forde S.
Thornloe

RE0009 Hillier, John A.
Scarborough

RE0010 Calvary-Wallace-Zion
Pastoral Charge
United Church of Canada
Listowel

RE0011 Barker, Harold W.
Scarborough

RE0012 Postma, John F.
Ottawa

RE0013 Hansford, Betty A.
Oakville

RE0014 Lacey, Howard F.A.
Orillia

RE0015 First United Church
United Church of Canada
Port Credit

RE0016 Hamilton and District
Council of Women
Hamilton

RE0017 Thompson, M.J.
Thessalon

RE0018 Baruss, Rita
Gore's Landing

RE0019 Mattawa Pastoral Charge
United Church of Canada
Mattawa

RE0020 Day, Wilf
Port Hope

RE0021 Dow, Rev. Ernest
Richard's Landing

RE0022 Belleville Ministerial Association
Belleville

RE0023 Lobo, J.F.
Toronto

RE0024 Todd, Rev. L.G.
Moorefield

RE0025 Loyal Orange Association
in Ontario
Willowdale

RE0026 Hamilton and District
Christian Churches Association
Hamilton

RE0027 Imbeau, Don
Kenora

RE0028 Mackenzie, Cathy
St. Catharines

RE0029 Hamilton Conference
United Church of Canada
Carlisle

RE0030 Posterski, Don
Scarborough

RE0031 Davie, Susan
Bowmanville

RE0032 Horner, Janet
Agincourt

RE0033 Harris, Margaret
Milton

RE0034 Wyoming-Uttoxeter Pastoral Charge
United Church of Canada
Wyoming

RE0035 Hunter, Rev. Dr. Gordon C.
Thornhill

RE0036 Masters, D.C.
Guelph

RE0037 Manitou Conference
United Church of Canada
North Bay

RE0038 Holloway Street United Church
United Church of Canada
Belleville

RE0039 Arkell United Church
United Church of Canada
Arkell

RE0040 Smith, Very Rev'd. Jerry
Timmins

RE0041 Styles, Frankish R.
Toronto

RE0042 Independent Loyal Orange Lodge No. 150
Toronto

RE0043 B'nai Brith Canada
Downsview

RE0044 Southcott, Venerable Harvey F.
Carleton Place
RE0045 Paper, Jordan
North York
RE0046 Toronto Mayor's Committee
on Community and Race Relations
Toronto
RE0047 Evangelical Mennonite
Mission Conference
St. Thomas
RE0048 Ecumenical Study Commission
on Public Education
Hamilton
RE0049 Jain Society
Toronto
RE0050 Watters, Dr. Wendell W.
Ancaster
RE0051 Gontier, Hazel
Toronto
RE0052 Cambrian Presbytery
United Church of Canada
Terrace Bay
RE0053 First Reformed Church
Chatham
RE0054 Schomberg/Dunkerron Pastoral Charge
United Church of Canada
Schomberg
RE0055 Cold Springs Pastoral Charge
United Church of Canada
Cobourg
RE0056 Ontario Branch
Canadian Sunday School Mission
Stouffville
RE0057 Shaarei-Beth El Congregation
Oakville
RE0058 St. Jude's Church
Anglican Church of Canada
Brantford
RE0059 Christian Service Centers of Canada
Woodstock
RE0060 Stables, Rev. John R.
Brantford
RE0061 Holmes, Dr. Christopher
Palgrave
RE0062 Rodney Christian Mission
Rodney
RE0063 Zylberberg, Philip
Wyers, Harvey
Sudbury
RE0064 Provincial Synod, Ontario
Anglican Church of Canada
Toronto

RE0065 Gara, Lillian H.
London

RE0066 Cultural Understanding Everywhere
Mississauga

RE0067 Erie Presbytery
United Church of Canada
Brantford

RE0068 Board of Education
for the City of Windsor
Windsor

RE0069 Grey County Board of Education
Markdale

RE0070 Waterloo County Board of Education
Kitchener

RE0071 Leeds and Grenville County
Board of Education
Brockville

RE0072 Board of Education
for the City of Scarborough
Scarborough

RE0073 Ministry with the Deaf
Bay of Quinte Conference
United Church of Canada
Belleville

RE0074 St. Paul's United Church
United Church of Canada
Paris

RE0075 Gentles, Ian
Toronto

RE0076 Canadian Conference
Brethren in Christ Church
Fort Erie

RE0077 Sandilands, Rev. Jim
Burlington

RE0078 Urban Alliance on Race Relations
Toronto

RE0079 Race Relations Committee
of Kitchener-Waterloo
Kitchener

RE0080 Foote, Mike
Brantford

RE0081 Paulsen, Rev. Les
Clearwater

RE0082 Citizens for Public Justice
Toronto

RE0083 Ontario Region
Church of Jesus Christ
of Latter-Day Saints
Kitchener

RE0084 Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada
Toronto

RE0085 Elgin Area Bible Club
St. Thomas

RE0086 Tiwari, Rampersaud
Scarborough

RE0087 Board of Education
for the City of North York
North York

RE0088 Evangelical Fellowship of Canada
Markham

RE0089 Diocese of Niagara
Anglican Church of Canada
Hamilton

RE0090 Lakeshore Free Methodist Church
Cobourg

RE0091 Davis, Dr. Brian K.
Scarborough

RE0092 Smith, Rev. Dr. Robin
Toronto

RE0093 Beringer, Dr. Walter
Toronto

RE0094 Kennedy, Dr. J.C.
Kingston

RE0095 Scott, Rev. Dr. Graham A.D.
Burlington

RE0096 Congregation B'Nai Jacob
Niagara Falls

RE0097 Detmar, Klaas
Ancaster

RE0098 Association of Christian Educators
Durham Region
Whitby

RE0099 Weigand, Lorna
Scarborough

RE0100 Sault and District Evangelical
Ministerial Association
Sault Ste. Marie

RE0101 Hancock, Richard and Janice
Mississauga

RE0102 Ontario Public Supervisory
Officers' Association
Peterborough

RE0103 Baptist Convention
of Ontario and Quebec
Toronto

RE0104 Province of Ontario
Education Officers' Association
Sudbury

RE0105 The Sault Ste. Marie
Board of Education
Sault Ste. Marie

RE0106 Northern Ontario Public School
Principals' Association
North Bay

RE0107 Public Education Concerns Committee
Diocese of Huron
Anglican Church of Canada
Kingsville

RE0108 Territorial Headquarters
for Canada and Bermuda
Salvation Army
Toronto

RE0109 Beck, Dr. Clive
Toronto

RE0110 Mitchell, Rev. David J.
Toronto

RE0111 Networkers Ministerial Group
Stratford

RE0112 East Parry Sound
Board of Education
South River

RE0113 Lincoln County
Board of Education
St. Catharines

RE0114 Baha'i Community of Canada
Thornhill

RE0115 Parkwoods United Church
United Church of Canada
Toronto

RE0116 Wesley-Willis Church Board
United Church of Canada
Clinton

RE0117 Christian Parents and
Citizens Organization
Brampton

RE0118 Leaside United Church
United Church of Canada
Toronto

RE0119 Canadian Protestant League
Burlington

RE0120 Ontario Principals' Association
Windsor

RE0121 Religious Education Interest Group
University of Western Ontario
London

RE0122 Pierzchalska, Helena
Inglewood

RE0123 Durham Women Teachers' Association
Whitby

RE0124 Kent County
Board of Education
Chatham

RE0125 Carleton Board of Education
Nepean

RE0126 Sibley, Rev. Robert J.
Lyndhurst

RE0127 Rosychuk, Larry and Nancy
Sault Ste. Marie
RE0128 Landgraff, Gaye
Mississauga
RE0129 Raymer, Robert W.
Elmira
RE0130 Watters, Derek
Dundas
RE0131 Seebach, Victoria
Erin
RE0132 Coalition for Public Education
Toronto
RE0133 Colley, Louise
Guelph
RE0134 Galardo, Marisa
Sudbury
RE0135 Ontario Federation of Home
and School Associations, Inc.
Toronto
RE0136 Greulich, Pastor Wayne
Drayton
RE0137 Mission in Canada
United Church of Canada
London
RE0138 Board of Education
for the City of Toronto
Toronto
RE0139 Powassan Pastoral Charge
United Church of Canada
Powassan
RE0140 Houghton Centre Gospel Church
Port Burwell
RE0141 London Conference
United Church of Canada
London
RE0142 Bancroft and North Hastings Ministerial
Bancroft
RE0143 Ripley, J.H.
St. Catharines
RE0144 French, Mollie M.
Chatham
RE0145 Creemore Pastoral Charge
United Church of Canada
New Lowell
RE0146 John Wesley United Church
United Church of Canada
Sault Ste. Marie
RE0147 Windrem, Rev. Verna
Cobourg
RE0148 Kompass, Rev. Paul
Portland

RE0149 Council of Christian
Reformed Churches in Canada
Burlington

RE0150 Zielonko, John
Unionville

RE0151 Kidd, Rev. Gilbert W.
Blind River

RE0152 Century United Church
United Church of Canada
Etobicoke

RE0153 Powell, Rev. Ken
Sarnia

RE0154 St. Andrew's United Church
United Church of Canada
Blind River

RE0155 M. J. Dacey-Rankin P.T.A.
Sault Ste. Marie

RE0156 Wingham Pentecostal Church
Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada
Wingham

RE0157 Brooks, Edmund A.
South River

RE0158 H. H. Prince Aga Khan Shia Imami
Ismaili Council for Canada
Don Mills

RE0159 Finnish Pentecostal Church
Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada
Sault Ste. Marie

RE0160 Lindsay Presbytery
United Church of Canada
Janetville

RE0161 First United Church
United Church of Canada
Owen Sound

RE0162 St. John's United Church
United Church of Canada
Georgetown

RE0163 Downie, Gerald
Peterborough

RE0164 The Wellington County
Board of Education
Guelph

RE0165 First Unitarian Congregation
Ottawa

RE0166 Edwards, Chester H.
Thornloe

RE0167 Hallman, Ron
Vineland

RE0168 Srigley, Len
Scarborough

RE0169 Religious Education in
Elementary Schools Committee
St. Paul's United Church
Milton

RE0170 Church Session of
Knox Presbyterian Church, Magnetawan
Presbyterian Church in Canada
Burk's Falls

RE0171 Divisions of World Outreach
and Mission in Canada
Essex Presbytery
United Church of Canada
Windsor

RE0172 Church Session of
St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church
Presbyterian Church in Canada
Burk's Falls

RE0173 Wilhelm, William and Bernadette
Smithville

RE0174 Bethel Gospel Tabernacle
Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada
Hamilton

RE0175 McLeod, Karen
Campbellford

RE0176 Armour Heights
Family and School Association
Toronto

RE0177 Hastings County
Board of Education
Belleville

RE0178 Meyer, Dr. John R.
Windsor

RE0179 Martin, Pastor Gord
Waterloo

RE0180 Ferguson, Judith
Corbeil

RE0181 Departments and Programs of Religious
Studies of Ontario Universities
Windsor

RE0182 Milnes, Rev. F.
Orono
Shirran, Capt. R.
Yates, Rev. B.
Bowmanville

RE0183 Anglican Clergy of
Scarborough Deanery Clericus
Anglican Church of Canada
West Hill

RE0184 Timmermans, Trudy
Blenheim

RE0185 Ontario Moral/Values
Education Association
Toronto

RE0186 Bellsmith, Pastor E.J.
Mississauga

RE0187 Pratt, Wanda
Petrolia

RE0188 Parish of Augusta
Anglican Church of Canada
Maitland

RE0189 Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools
Ancaster

RE0190 Ontario Region
Canadian Jewish Congress
Willowdale

RE0191 Residents of Haliburton County
Minden

RE0192 Boucher, Denise
de Cotret, Michele
Ottawa

RE0193 Canadian Unitarian Council
Toronto

RE0194 Association des enseignantes
et des enseignants franco-ontariens
Ottawa

RE0195 St. Andrew's Hespeler
Presbyterian Church
Presbyterian Church in Canada
Cambridge

RE0196 Eastern and Central Canadian District
Christian and Missionary Alliance
Burlington

RE0197 Lake Superior
Board of Education
Marathon

RE0198 Manitou Conference
United Church of Canada
North Bay

RE0199 Evangel Temple
Toronto

RE0200 Sudbury Board of Education
Sudbury

RE0201 Parish of Metcalfe Greely Vernon
Diocese of Ottawa
Anglican Church of Canada
Metcalfe

RE0202 Council of the Vestry
St. Mark's Anglican Church
Anglican Church of Canada
Barriefield

RE0203 St. Matthew on the Plains, Aldershot
Diocese of Niagara
Anglican Church of Canada
Burlington

RE0204 Conseil Scolaire de Langue d'Ottawa-Carleton
Gloucester

RE0205 Knox Presbyterian Church
Presbyterian Church in Canada
Dundas

RE0206 Campbell, Douglas C.
Toronto

RE0207 Board of Education for
the City of Hamilton
Hamilton

RE0208 York Region
Board of Education
Aurora

RE0209 Programme in Religious Studies
Faculty of Arts
York University
North York

RE0210 Sage, Robert F.
Sarnia

RE0211 Bryant-Scott, Rev. D. Bruce
Welland

RE0212 British Heritage Institute (Canada) Inc.
Oakville

RE0213 Greek Orthodox Church in Canada
Toronto

RE0214 Federation of Women Teachers'
Associations of Ontario
Toronto

RE0215 Mitchell, Tonya
Wyoming

RE0216 Calvary Pentecostal Church
Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada
Woodstock

RE0217 Sassi, Pastor Mario D.
London

RE0218 Mennonite Parent Association
Aylmer

RE0219 Thompson, Joseph
Sarnia

RE0220 Paulin Memorial Presbyterian Church
Presbyterian Church in Canada
Windsor

RE0221 Lambton Presbytery
United Church of Canada
Sarnia

RE0222 Hersil Publishing
London

RE0223 Pelton, Mona
Embro

RE0224 Szczepanik, Ed
Sault Ste. Marie

RE0225 Interfaith Developmental
Education Association
Burlington

RE0226 Males, Stephen C.G.
Delaware

RE0227 Williams, James R.
St. Thomas

RE0228 Eastwood Citadel Corps and
South Windsor Citadel Corps
Salvation Army
Windsor

RE0229 Temple Baptist Church
Windsor

RE0230 Klym, Mark
Sault Ste. Marie

RE0231 Smith, Pastor John A.
Campbell, Marilyn
Bruce Mines

RE0232 Concerned Parents
Dryden

RE0233 Citizens for Christian Values
Sault Ste. Marie

RE0234 Dryden Board of Education
Dryden

RE0235 Deanery of Lambton
Anglican Church of Canada
London

RE0236 Janhunen, Eric
Sarnia

RE0237 Colquhoun, Mark
Sarnia

RE0238 Lambton County Roman Catholic
Separate School Board
Sarnia

RE0239 French Language Section
Lambton County Board of Education
Sarnia

RE0240 Sarnia and District Council of Clergy
Sarnia

RE0241 Lambton County Board of Education
Sarnia

RE0242 Willoughby, Rev. Paul
Belle River

RE0243 Community Missionary Church
Windsor

RE0244 Dresden Ministerial Association
Dresden

RE0245 Windsor Home and School Council
Windsor

RE0246 Jourdikian, Dr. Felor
Windsor

RE0247 Foster, Ruth
Port Stanley

RE0248 City Bible Church
Sault Ste. Marie

RE0249 Willis, Ken
London

RE0250 Diocese of Huron
Anglican Church of Canada
London

RE0251 London Conference
United Church of Canada
London

RE0252 Huron-Perth United Church Women
United Church of Canada
Tavistock

RE0253 Diocese of Keewatin
Anglican Church of Canada
Dryden

RE0254 Donald Young School Community
Emo

RE0255 Christian Parents' Association and
Canadian Sunday School Mission
Rainy River

RE0256 Ignace Gospel Church
Ignace

RE0257 Dryden and Area Ministerial Association
Dryden

RE0258 Concerned Citizens
for Christian Education
Thunder Bay

RE0259 Lakehead Board of Education
Thunder Bay

RE0260 VanderKam, Peter B.
Thunder Bay

RE0261 James, Andy
Dorion

RE0262 Bradley, Paul
Lucan

RE0263 Sault and District Evangelical
Ministerial Association
Sault Ste. Marie

RE0264 Algoma Presbytery
United Church of Canada
Richards Landing

RE0265 Timiskaming Board of Education
New Liskeard

RE0266 Concerned Citizens
of East Parry Sound District
Sundridge

RE0267 Missionary Church Pastors
North Bay Area
North Bay

RE0268 Evangelical Ministerial
of Waterloo Region
Kitchener

RE0269 Fearnley, Fran
Bailieboro

RE0270 Islamic School of Ottawa
Ottawa

RE0271 Elders of the Island Bible Chapel
Richards Landing

RE0272 McLellan, Ruth
Sault Ste. Marie

RE0273 Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is
of Sault Ste. Marie
Sault Ste. Marie

RE0274 St. Paul's Presbyterian Church
Presbyterian Church in Canada
Englehart

RE0275 Islamic Propagation Centre
Mississauga

RE0276 Tamney, Roderick
Oshawa

RE0277 Brant County Board of Education
Brantford

RE0278 Brigham, Larry
Thunder Bay

RE0279 Calvin Presbyterian Church
Presbyterian Church in Canada
North Bay

RE0280 Eramosa Ministerial Association
Rockwood

RE0281 Westmount United Church
United Church of Canada
Orillia

RE0282 Nipissing Board of Education
North Bay

RE0283 West Parry Sound
Board of Education
Parry Sound

RE0284 Vivian, Marian
North Bay

RE0285 Arndt, Rev. Randy
North Bay

RE0286 Diocese of Moosonee
Anglican Church of Canada
Moosonee

RE0287 Parr, A.V.
Kenty's Corners

RE0288 Ehrens-Lis, Naomi
Sault Ste. Marie

RE0289 Burns, Gloria
Sault Ste. Marie

RE0290 Guth, Dr. Francis R.
Sault Ste. Marie

RE0291 Congregation Beth Jacob
Sault Ste. Marie

RE0292 Joint Department of Religious Studies
Laurentian University
Sudbury

RE0293 Glad Tidings Tabernacle
Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada
Sudbury

RE0294 Lubbers, Ralph
Noelville

RE0295 Baha'i Community
Sudbury

RE0296 Weatherby, Gene
Sudbury

RE0297 Wilson, Floyd R.
London

RE0298 Smale, Bob
Woodstock

RE0299 All Saints' Anglican Church
Anglican Church of Canada
Waterloo

RE0300 Baha'i Communities
of Kitchener and Waterloo
Kitchener

RE0301 McKay, Linda
St. Thomas

RE0302 Kitchen, Kim
Woodstock

RE0303 Ford, Michelle
London

RE0304 Radford, Bruce
Woodstock

RE0305 Coupe, Al
Milton

RE0306 Millington, Jim and Nancie
St. Catharines

RE0307 Holmes, Rev. Myles H.
Niagara Falls

RE0308 Hunston, Rev. Ramon
Welland

RE0309 Main Street Baptist Church
Niagara Falls

RE0310 Sweets Corners Christian Church
Sweets Corners

RE0311 Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is
of St. Catharines
St. Catharines

RE0312 Classis of Ontario (Inc.)
Reformed Church in America
Welland

RE0313 Wilson, Wendy
Clarke, Muriel
Kitchener

RE0314 Bruce County Board of Education
Chesley

RE0315 Perth County Board of Education
Stratford

RE0316 Bryant, M. Darrol
Koppedrayer, K. I.
Malone, Mary
Remus, Harold E.
Waterloo University and
Wilfrid Laurier University
Waterloo

RE0317 Inter-Synod Committee on
Public and Private Education
Presbyterian Church in Canada
Hamilton

RE0318 Cornerstone Pentecostal Church
Cambridge

RE0319 Task Group on Religious
Education in the Schools
Diocese of Huron
Waterloo

RE0320 Parry, Rev. Derek
Cambridge

RE0321 Lanktree, David
Waterloo

RE0322 Kincardine Pentecostal Church
Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada
Kincardine

RE0323 Memorial Baptist Church
Stratford

RE0324 Calvary Baptist Church
Canadian Baptist Federation
Cobourg

RE0325 Durham County
Board of Education
Oshawa

RE0326 Concerned Citizens for Bible Centred
Religious Education in Our Schools
Peterborough

RE0327 Leslie, Jean
Madoc

RE0328 Cobourg Presbytery
United Church of Canada
Port Hope

RE0329 Baker, Walter
Lindsay

RE0330 Peterborough Unitarian Fellowship
Peterborough

RE0331 Crookall, Rev. Stan
Cobourg

RE0332 Crookall, Tim
Bowmanville

RE0333 Baha'i Community of Oshawa
Oshawa

RE0334 Herring, John B.
Belleville

RE0335 Concerned Citizens
East Northumberland
and South Hastings Counties
Frankford

RE0336 Plett, Dr. E.G.
North Gower

RE0337 Community Pentecostal Church
Orleans

RE0338 Ottawa Presbytery
Montreal and Ottawa Conference
United Church of Canada
Ottawa

RE0339 Hopkins, Elaine
Bishop Hamilton School
Ottawa

RE0340 Federation of Sikh
Societies in Canada
Ottawa

RE0341 Carleton Council of
Parent/School Associations
Nepean

RE0342 Diocese of Ottawa
Anglican Church of Canada
Ottawa

RE0343 Multiculturalism Advisory Committee
Ottawa Board of Education
Ottawa

RE0344 Baha'i Community of Ottawa
Ottawa

RE0345 Ottawa Ad Hoc Committee for
Religious Education in Public Schools
Ottawa

RE0346 League for Human Rights
B'nai Brith of Canada
Ottawa

RE0347 Council of Women of Ottawa and Area
Ottawa

RE0348 Athens and District Ministerial Association
Athens

RE0349 Free Methodist Church
Smiths Falls

RE0350 Cathedral Church of St. George
Anglican Church of Canada
Kingston

RE0351 Snider, Judy
Ferguson, Nancy
Frans, Ena
Smiths Falls

RE0352 Counties School Committee
of Leeds and Grenville
Brockville

RE0353 Kingston Presbytery
United Church of Canada
Brockville

RE0354 Higgison, Dennis J.
Mallorytown

RE0355 Smiths Falls Christian Academy
Smiths Falls
Perth Christian Academy
Perth

RE0356 Pineview School Committee
Athens

RE0357 Johnston, Katherine
Wood, Elaine
Smiths Falls

RE0358 Howard, Stuart W.
Perth

RE0359 Thompson, Rev. John V.
Owen Sound

RE0360 Medd, Rev. James B.
Cameron

RE0361 Luker, Ann
Hawkestone

RE0362 Freeman, Rev. Bill
Orillia

RE0363 Holt Free Methodist Church
Mount Albert

RE0364 Ontario Conference of the
Seventh-day Adventist Church
Oshawa

RE0365 Mission in Canada Committee
Muskoka Presbytery
United Church in Canada
Dwight

RE0366 Baha'i Community of Tiny Township
Perkinsfield

RE0367 Fernhout, Dr. Harry
Toronto

RE0368 Canadian Civil Liberties Association
Toronto

RE0369 Clubine, John
York

RE0370 Committee for the Advancement of Islam
Toronto

RE0371 Ontario Public School
Boards' Association
Sudbury

RE0372 Ontario Council of Sikhs
Toronto

RE0373 Church of Scientology of Toronto
Toronto

RE0374 Chumak, Alex
Toronto

RE0375 Toronto Conference
United Church of Canada
Toronto

RE0376 Toronto South Presbytery
Toronto Conference
United Church of Canada
Toronto

RE0377 Canadian Council of Hindus
Toronto

RE0378 Muslim Association of Hamilton
Hamilton

RE0379 Western Ontario District
Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada
Burlington

RE0380 Salvation Army in Erin Mills
Mississauga

RE0381 Martin, Rev. Bruce A.
Brampton

RE0382 Dufferin-Peel Presbytery
United Church of Canada
Orangeville

RE0383 Benschop, Mary
Port Perry

RE0384 Ontario Association of
Alternative and Independent Schools
Toronto

RE0385 Council of Muslim Communities of Canada
Mississauga

RE0386 Parkwoods United Church
United Church of Canada
Don Mills

RE0387 Coalition of Christian Churches
of Unionville and Markham
Unionville

RE0388 Gamble, John
Cambridge

RE0389 Standing Committee on
Inter-Church/Inter-Faith Relations
Toronto Conference
United Church of Canada
Sutton West

RE0390 Provincial Council of Women of Ontario
St. Catharines

RE0391 Penny, Rev. Matthew
Hyde Park

RE0392 French-language Section
Simcoe County
Board of Education
Midland

RE0393 Davis, Mrs. Eleanor
Forest

RE0394 Toronto and Area Council of Women
Toronto

RE0395 Unitarian Congregation of South Peel
Mississauga

RE0396 Canadian Council of Christians and Jews
Toronto

RE0397 Jain Society of Toronto
Islington

RE0398 Shekinah Christian Centre
Mississauga

RE0399 Greene, Dr. Ralph
Mississauga

RE0400 Beesley, David H.
Port Perry

RE0401 Karnick, Irwin
Peterborough

RE0402 Dyck, David
Kitchener

RE0403 Kerr-Wilson, John R.
Westport

RE0404 Ontario Catholic Supervisory
Officers' Association
Mississauga

RE0405 Cochrane Presbytery
United Church of Canada
Timmins

RE0406 Le Conseil d'education catholique
pour les francophones de l'Ontario
Ottawa

RE0407 Martin, Mrs. Sheila
Kingston

RE0408 DeVille, Adam
Brantford

APPENDIX I

THE GOALS OF EDUCATION

The Ministry of Education in Ontario strives to provide in the schools of the province equal opportunity for all. In its contribution to programs, personnel, facilities, and finances, the ministry has the overall purpose of helping individual learners to achieve their potential in physical, intellectual, emotional, social, cultural, and moral development. The goals of education, therefore, consist of helping each student to:

1. develop a responsiveness to the dynamic processes of learning;
2. develop resourcefulness, adaptability, and creativity in learning and living;
3. acquire the basic knowledge and skills needed to comprehend and express ideas through words, numbers, and other symbols;
4. develop physical fitness and good health;
5. gain satisfaction from participating and from sharing the participation of others in various forms of artistic expression;
6. develop a feeling of self-worth;
7. develop an understanding of the role of the individual within the family and the role of the family within society;
8. acquire skills that contribute to self-reliance in solving problems in everyday life;
9. develop a sense of personal responsibility in society at the local, national, and international levels;
10. develop esteem for the customs, cultures, and beliefs of a wide variety of societal groups;
11. acquire skills and attitudes that will lead to satisfaction and productivity in the world of work;
12. develop respect for the environment and a commitment to the wise use of resources;
13. develop values related to personal, ethical, or religious beliefs and to the common welfare of society.